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Private Sector White Collar Workers: Examining Their Propensity For Unionism

George Robert Forsyth

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PRIVATE SECTOR WHITE COLLAR WORKERS:
EXAMINING THEIR PROPENSITY FOR UNIONISM

by
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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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London, Ontario
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ABSTRACT

In spite of renewed efforts and public sector organizing successes, private sector white collar employees are not joining the union ranks. The large number of white collar workers in the private sector who remain outside the union fold continue to confound the historical rationale for union development.

Traditionally, research into the white collar area has dwelt on the similarities and differences between white and blue collar jobs and job problems. The efforts of both management and unions have been directed toward inducing membership around the modified values of their respective positions in the industrial relations system and, thereby, limiting the options open to white collar employees. Blue collar unions, with blue collar organizers promoting a blue collar story have not been able to make a significant breakthrough. Nor have the member-non-member comparisons produced much insight into white collar reluctance to join.

The fact that public sector white collar workers have accepted organization as part of their employment relationship prompted the approach used in this research. From existing scales, the propensity of each respondent for union membership was categorized as high or low. These groups were then investigated across various dimensions to determine if there were evident needs and expectations associated with

each propensity group. The objective was one of determining if the associations provided opportunities for governments, unions, and managements to effectively meet white collar needs in the work setting and thus, influence employee decisions to join or, remain outside, the union fold.

The study used John Dunlop's Industrial Relations Systems model to organize and analyze the data and related hypotheses. Addressing the broad question of why workers join, the study looked at many of the variables of prior research in an attempt to relate these to respondent propensity groups, and their subsequent influence on changing propensities.

Using the Dunlop framework and the data from the respondent sample it is apparent that private sector white collar organizing likely will never be a mass movement. The impact of improved wages, fringe benefits and working conditions which rallied blue collar workers to the union ranks in past decades has not provided sufficient stimulus for white collar organization. In fact, the study suggests that the differences exist in the areas of job challenge and opportunity for advancement along with other non-economic dimensions of the job, areas where union experience is extremely limited.

In the private sector there seems to be no one

overriding issue for the unions to grasp. As a result, the strategies for organization, of necessity, will be selective, time consuming and costly unless new legislation or major changes in the system's market or technological parameters alter the setting and change the potential impact of the system's participants.

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CHAPTER I

PRIVATE SECTOR WHITE COLLAR ORGANIZATION: A UNION DILEMMA

Union organization among private sector, white collar, non-professional employees presents a confused picture.¹ Best estimates place the level of union membership among this group at approximately 10% with only limited growth during the decade between 1960 and 1970. (Table 1-1) Such penetration falls short of the average membership figures among blue collar workers (34.4% - 1972) and publicly employed white collar workers.² Unions, at least relatively speaking, have not been successful in organizing private sector white collar workers, and little research has centered on this lack of response to the union thrust for membership growth. Recent research and literature has had little to say on the organization difficulties of the white collar sector and it is this gap that provides a focus for the research study.

Growth in the white collar workforce since the Second World War is well documented. (Tables 1-2 and 1-3) General interest in white collar unionism has grown also, primarily because governments at all levels now permit employee organization. Major white collar organizing successes have occurred

Table 1-1

Estimated White Collar Membership in Unions by Province

Province	Union Membership, % of White Collar Workforce	Province	Union Membership, % of White Collar Workforce
B.C.	15%	Que.	22%
Alta.	10%	N.B.	14%
Sask.	32%	N.S.	3%
Man.	12%	P.E.I.	5%
Ont.	10%	Nfld.	15%

Source: "Report on White Collar Questionnaire Completed by C.L.C. and Directly Chartered Unions", p.4. 1967.³

Table 1-2

White Collar Employment as a Percentage of the Workforce - U.S.*

Major Occupation Groups	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970**
White Collar Workers (%)	17.6	21.3	24.9	29.4	31.1	36.6	42.0	45.2
Manual Workers (%)	35.8	38.2	40.2	39.6	39.8	41.1	37.5	35.5
Service Workers (%)	9.0	9.6	7.8	9.8	11.7	10.5	12.2	12.4
Farm Workers (%)	37.6	30.9	27.0	21.2	17.4	11.8	7.9	4.5

Sources: *Kassalow, Everett M., "New Union Frontiers: White Collar Workers", Harvard Business Review, January-February, 1962 p.50.

**Employment and Earnings, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, October 1970.

Table 1-3

The Labor Force, Percentage Distribution of the Employed
by Major Occupational Group - Canada

Major Occupational Groups	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1970
Managerial	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.4	9.5	10.0
Professional & Technical	9.9	10.6	10.6	10.6	11.4	12.2	12.4	13.0	13.6
Clerical & Sales	20.7	20.6	20.6	20.8	20.4	20.8	20.9	21.4	21.9
Service & Recreation	10.9	10.9	11.1	11.7	11.6	11.4	11.8	12.0	12.3
Transportation & Communication	6.7	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.3	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.3
Farm Workers	11.3	10.6	10.3	9.6	8.7	7.7	7.6	7.3	6.5
Fishermen Trappers & Loggers	2.1	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.6
Craft Produc- tion & Related Workers	24.2	24.7	24.9	24.6	25.2	26.1	26.1	25.3	24.8
Laborers & Unskilled	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	4.1	4.0

Source: Canada Year Book, 1972, Table 4, p. 835.

among government employees, teachers, nurses and other professional employees. But evidence from the private sector remains unclear because few office and sales workers, the traditional focus for white-collar organizers, have joined the unions. Only recently however, have the major unions begun to act in any concerted fashion to organize white-collar employees in the private sector.⁴ Early efforts in

this area were not encouraging, but recognition by the unions that "we need them and they need us", suggests a new seriousness that was not apparent in prior organizing efforts.⁵

I. The Background for White-Collar Organizing

Traditionally, North American unions have been institutions of the blue collar worker. While there is some evidence of change, the leadership, policies, practices and current interests of most unions remain oriented around the blue collar member. Despite significant shifts toward white collar employment in the labor force, blue collar workers continue as the dominant influence in organized labor. Industrial unionism has failed to penetrate private industry's white collar ranks. Some of this failure may be attributed to the historical differences between blue and white collar groups. Industrial unions continue to approach the problems of the white collar worker with solutions contrived to meet the needs of their blue collar members, and the approach has not worked.⁶

On the other hand, management has appeared derelict in assuming unwarranted differences between white and blue collar workers. Too often, white collar employees are grouped with the management team. They are assumed to share management values and aspirations. They are expected to place management and company needs ahead of personal needs, even where there was evidence of growing disparities between

management and its white collar workforce.

No doubt history has helped to shape both union and management attitudes toward white collar employees. The traditional strategies for organizing have been developed in the context of an historical evolution that, at times, tended to cloud current white collar needs and developments. The low wages, poor working conditions and lack of job security which once faced blue collar workers have been major determinants in the union policy emphasis. From a management viewpoint the strategies, for resisting organization, were often as weakly based. These assumed that proximity would substitute for involvement, security for job challenge and access to management for effective two-way communication.

The past two decades have seen significant growth in the use of collective bargaining by groups formerly denied access, or opposed, to using the process. During this time the whole question of white collar unionism has been revived. But the question has taken on expanded dimensions. It now involves new groups such as teachers, firemen, policemen, professional engineers, scientists and architects: groups long thought to be immune from unionization. Among these new groups many of the traditional issues appear to exist. There is continuing interest in wages and fringe benefits. At the same time there is evidence of emerging new issues. These include loss of jobs, performance measurement,

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involvement in management decisions affecting job security, and control over some aspects of the job such as professional requirements and promotion. While many of the problems can be viewed as extensions of the labor movement's traditional bargaining experience, white collar organizers have failed to sell this possible community of interests to prospective white collar members.

Two conclusions seem evident from the historical setting in which unionism has developed. Both provide an important preface to the study of white collar interest in unionism. First, the factors in union development in Canada appear similar to many of the factors which influenced the shape and growth of union-management relations in the United States. Thus any consideration of white collar unionism in the Canadian setting will draw, to some extent, on U.S. experience.⁸ Second, most private sector white collar workers have not had any significant experience with blue collar problems and thus are less impressed with past solutions and the potential of collective bargaining for meeting future needs.

A. The White Collar Worker: A Definition

The terms "white collar" and "blue collar" have never adequately encompassed neatly defined groups. It is difficult to be quantitatively specific about who or how many white collar workers there are. There is no census classification

of white collar workers in either the United States or Canada. The definitions have been based on several criteria: type of job, payroll base or time period, type of education or training required, job responsibility and job location. Once informally classified, many jobs remain "white" or "blue" even after the content changes. For example, some manual jobs are paid on a salary base while white collar jobs, often to facilitate overtime payments, have moved to hourly equivalents. Automation has tended to shift the content of some jobs from a dominantly manual task to one of clerical content without any formal reclassification. Elsewhere the training and educational requirements for some traditional blue collar jobs now exceed those necessary to hold jobs in some white collar categories. The decision to classify jobs one way or the other often relates more to timely expediency than to objective criteria.

Unions also are ambivalent on the issues of white and blue collar definitions. At times, they choose to identify the white collar worker and his needs as a thing separate and apart from those of the blue collar group. At other times, there is a reluctance to separate the classifications. Until recently, unions in both Canada and the United States made no attempt to keep separate records of the two groups, so it remains a matter of some speculation as to the actual makeup of the union rolls in terms of a white and blue collar breakdown. In a study for the Prime Minister's Task Force

on Labour Relations,⁹ Francis Bairstow surveyed various Canadian unions to determine the mix of white and blue collar members.¹⁰ She noted that inadequate records within union offices made an accurate estimate impossible.

Other publications, notably those of the federal and provincial governments, tend to deal only in broad occupational groupings. Traditionally these have included:

- i. Managerial.
- ii. Professional and Technical
- iii. Clerical
- iv. Sales*
- v. Communications

*In some publications the word commercial is used in place of sales.

These groups cannot be used to estimate the potential for union membership since many in the managerial and professional classifications are prevented from joining. A second problem of definition emerges because published data often do not separate private and public sector figures, further complicating the categorization of white and blue collar workers. Some of the jobs classified in the broad white collar groups are not within the sphere of traditional reporting, making neat definitions even more tenuous. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports on white and blue collar occupations using a similar breakdown to that used in Canadian reporting, thus the problem of accurate definitions

remains clouded. More recently, the term, grey collar, has crept into the literature indicating some discomfort with the discrete separations evident in past writing.¹² Because of these difficulties, researchers have not developed an acceptable definition of the white collar worker and thus a study related orientation was necessary.

To facilitate this study the following definition was developed. If it tends to err conservatively the emphasis has been in the direction of assuring that it included only jobs that were:

- a) part of the traditional white collar classifications
- b) eligible for union membership
- c) employed in the private sector
- d) male¹³

Thus to qualify as "white collar" for the purposes of this study a respondent had to meet all four requirements.¹⁴

B. Developments in U.S. Unionism: A Brief Historical Profile

Labor historians, dealing with the period prior to the depression of the 1930's, had little to say about the white collar worker. However, they did attempt to pinpoint some of the reasons for union emergence and growth and, in so doing, helped to explain a few of the differences between the needs that prompted traditional blue collar unionism and those that faced the majority of white collar workers.

During the 1920's, in the decade leading up to the New Deal administration of Franklin Roosevelt, labor union membership dwindled drastically. Employer personnel programs were partly responsible. So were other employer devices such as: black lists, yellow-dog contracts and union-busting, plant security forces. Between 1932-35, with the United States in the midst of a depression, new legislation emerged which sought to balance the power between labor and management. Primary among these legislative enactments were the Norris-LaGuardia Anti-Injunction Act, The National Industrial Recovery Act and, in 1935, The Labor Management Relations Act (Wagner Act). Spurred by favorable legislation, union leaders launched active campaigns to recruit new members from all sections of the economy. Under the leadership of John L. Lewis, the Committee for Industrial Organization (later the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the C.I.O.) began organizing drives which culminated in the surrender of "big steel", the automobile industry, the rubber producers, northern textile mills and the meat packing industry. By 1941, four short years after its formation, the C.I.O. rivalled its trade union counterpart, the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) in both membership and influence.

While the New Deal encouraged labor to begin drives for membership, the uninterrupted production required for World War II did even more to entrench unionism among industrial workers. In return for agreements with a no-strike

provision, the War Labor Board required union and management to face each other across the bargaining table. Arbitration of the disputes arising under labor contracts emerged as a widely accepted practice. Collective agreements, and procedures for their interpretation, became an important part of the industrial relations process. By 1945, the total union membership in the United States exceeded 14 million, encompassing over 36% of the non-agricultural workforce.

The War's end saw industry turn its full potential to the pent-up demands of a deprived consumer market. Predicted post-war unemployment did not materialize immediately. In fact, the demand for labor outpaced the supply well into 1947, and the effects of technological change, improvements in communications, production techniques, and equipment were not felt until 1948, when the United States began to undergo some corrective adjustments in its economy. Union growth lagged behind increases in the workforce. Since 1948, membership as a percentage of the non-agricultural workforce has declined. (See Table 1-4)

Table 1-4

Union Membership as a Percentage of the Non-Agricultural Work Force, United States

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage of the Work Force</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage of the Work Force</u>
1935	13.0	1960	31.5
1940	26.9	1962	29.9
1945	35.5	1964	28.9
1950	31.5	1966	28.0
1955	33.2	1968	28.0

Source: Employment and Earnings, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C.: June 1971.

1. White Collar Unionism in the United States

The white collar worker played no significant part in the development of early unionism. With the exception of those employed by the railroads, some retail clerks, and professional groups such as the musicians and newspaper writers, white collar workers did not generally choose to associate with the union movement. As C. Wright Mills has observed in his book, White Collar: The American Middle Classes, published in 1948:

The white collar people slipped quietly into modern society. Whatever history they had is a history without events; whatever common interests they have do not lead to unity; whatever future they have will not be one of their own making. If they aspire at all it is to a middle course, at a time when there is no middle course available and hence an illusory course in an imaginary society. Internally they are split, fragmented; externally they are dependent on large forces. Even if they gained the will to act their actions, being unorganized, would be less a movement than a tangle of unconnected contests. As a group they do not practice an independent way of life. So

before an adequate idea of them can be formed, they have been taken for granted as familiar actors in an urban mass.¹⁵

If the white collar employee has any substantial history that can be identified, it did not begin until after the Second World War. Before that, his history was inextricably linked to that of management and obscured by the battles between capital and labor in the growing pains of an industrial society. The successful growth of union organizations during the late 1930's and 1940's was concerned almost exclusively with blue collar workers. It had no parallel in the white collar sector. Blue collar union growth, encouraged by industrial hardship and deprivation, depression economics and favorable legislation, reached new highs, but the gains included few white collar workers. The older unions provided little encouragement for the white collar workers to join. Many unions displayed outright hostility toward any attempt to facilitate white collar membership. Some unions had clauses in their constitutions forbidding white collar employees in their ranks.¹⁶ The few unions that accepted white collar employees had no special appeals to entice them. In fact, the white collar employee appeared quite happy with his position in relation to management. If the white collar history held any meaningful record of this relationship it was that white collar workers had attained a degree of status, higher wages, more security and better working conditions than their blue collar

counterparts, suggesting that they found little of value in what unions had to offer.

There were exceptions. The retail clerks, among the first white collar workers to organize, formed the Retail Clerks Union and joined the A.F.L. in 1890. They fought for many of the same changes that were key issues with the trade unions of the day, including: shorter hours, higher wages and more job security. Among government employees there were also agitators for union recognition. Postal workers in the U.S. first turned to the Knights of Labor for help in the eight hour day struggle. Later they, along with other independent groups, formed the National Association of Letter Carriers which eventually voted to affiliate with the A.F.L. The Post Office Clerks followed much the same pattern in their organization, although on several occasions they were confronted with "gag rules" which prevented the use of political lobbies in support of their cause. Indeed the U.S. Government, under Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, strengthened the Post Master General's control over his employees, making union organization even more difficult. In some instances these workers were excluded from legislation covering other federal employees. It was not until the Lloyd-Lafollette Act, of 1912, that the long struggle for recognition by the postal workers finally came to fruition.

Another group of white collar workers, the railway clerks, organized around the turn of the century. Although progress in their agitation for change was slow at the outset, their involvement with other railway unions produced a number of legislative advances prior to the passage of the National Labor Relations Act. Others, such as the musicians, the newspaper writers, the retail and wholesale clerks and some public employees, have relatively long histories of union involvement. However, organization among these groups represents an almost insignificant penetration in the total white collar sector.

For the white collar worker some important changes took place in the decade following the Second World War. Differences in wages and discrepancies in fringe benefits between white and blue collar workers favored the white collar worker prior to the war. Following 1946, new blue collar collective agreements closed the gap significantly. Somewhat later (approximately 1956 in the U.S. and 1960 in Canada) the occupational composition of the workforce changed so that the number of white collar workers surpassed those in blue collar occupations. Growth in white collar occupations has continued to exceed the rate experienced by the blue collar segment of the workforce. By 1970, the white collar workforce in the U.S. numbered in excess of 37 million, while the blue collar workers totalled just under 28 million.¹⁷

2. Recent Developments in U.S. White Collar Organization

Everett Kassalow, in his article "New Union Frontiers: White Collar Workers"¹⁸, has suggested that, "it may become almost a life and death matter for the unions in steel, automobiles, aircraft, machinery, rubber, chemicals, petroleum and other fields to unionize the growing host of office, technical and professional workers in these industries". The shift in labor force makeup in 1956, from predominantly blue collar to a white collar majority, and the subsequent growth of the white collar segment further underlined the need for unions to seriously consider this avenue for growth. Nor have the unions been oblivious to the need for change. Early in the 1960's the A.F.L. - C.I.O. suggested alterations to their administrative structure that would:

- a) establish at a high level within the A.F.L. - C.I.O., a white collar division,
- b) develop special appeals to attract the increasing number of women in the labor force and,
- c) establish white collar representation on the Executive Councils of the A.F.L. - C.I.O.

In 1962, Walter Reuther, seeking a solution to the problem of blue collar workforce reductions, suggested a plan under which blue collar workers who lost their jobs be given priority on white collar additions in their own companies.¹⁹ While the plan was rejected, for what were termed impractical assumptions, it is worth noting that, at General Motors, approximately 40 percent of its white collar workforce were

once employed in blue collar jobs.²⁰ Kassalow, commenting on this limited penetration, refers to it as a qualitative breakthrough suggesting that, "unionization in these areas is not the mysterious or all-difficult task that it is sometimes portrayed as being".²¹

White collar organization made tremendous gains during the 1950's but experienced a serious levelling out in the period between 1960 and 1970 in all areas but government employment. Unions, such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, continued to increase their membership base at a significantly greater rate than those unions seeking growth in the private sector.

T.O.P. (Technical, Office and Professional Workers) the white collar arm of the U.A.W. (United Automobile, Agricultural and Aerospace Workers of America) was formed to take advantage of the potential for white collar organizing in the industries serviced by the parent body. In principle, T.O.P. attempted to offer the strengths, skills and influence of the U.A.W. while structurally preserving a clear cut white collar identity through separate organizations. Table 1-5 shows T.O.P. results in organizing white collar workers for the U.A.W. The United Steelworkers of America (U.S.W.) has also provided a parallel structure to improve its appeal among white collar workers. Other unions, such as the Electrical Workers, have no special organization seeking

Table 1-5

T.O.P. Organizing Results, 1964-1972

	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>
Number of Elections	28	48	45	48	45	48	45	54	46
Number of Wins	14	29	26	37	28	28	32	34	28
Number of Losses	14	19	19	11	17	20	13	20	18
Eligible in Winning Elections	490	1886	1258	5400	2130	882	878	1371	713
Eligible in Losing Elections	655	2208	1945	833	1816	2588	840	2434	2460

Source: T.O.P. Department Organizing Activity: Annual Reports for 1964 through 1972, Detroit, Mich.

white collar members.. However, even where the industrial unions have developed identifiably separate organizations for white collar members the overwhelming presence of the parent body remains evident. The recognition that the special problems of white collar employees require special and different kinds of solutions is not shared by all organizers. Efforts to solve problems of other types of industrial workers cannot provide automatic solutions for white collar problems.²² Consistent with its view that white collar workers have special problems, the U.A.W. has pledged that white collar workers in its T.O.P. Organization will:

- a) elect their own bargaining committee composed exclusively of white collar employees,

- b) have their own membership meetings exclusively for white collar employees,
- c) negotiate their own contract covering white collar employees only,
- d) ratify their own contract by a vote among white collar employees exclusively,
- e) receive separate and special attention and service from trained and experienced staff representatives, including skilled bargainers, statisticians, research technicians, actuaries, insurance experts and salary analysts,
- f) benefit from a persistent and continuing effort by specialized U.A.W. Technical, Office and Professional Department to organize increasing numbers of white collar employees and meet their special needs.²³

Major emphasis is placed on the differences between white and blue collar workers and their needs although nothing specific is set forth. Nor are these differences evident in the actions that T.O.P. and similar organizations propose to take on behalf of white collar members. Rather, it seems that the differences are stressed to allay white collar fears of belonging to blue collar organizations.

Perhaps the major changes in U.S. white collar organization, as with Canadian activities, is the tremendous growth of unions in the public sector. With the addition

of these employees to membership lists, growth in the white collar unions increased at a rate substantially above that achieved in private sector additions.

Recently, the Conference Board reported that over two-thirds of the senior executives polled in a personnel survey stated that white collar unionization was on the upswing and of major concern to them. The same study reported that 16% of all union members are now white collar workers.²⁴ This represents approximately 11.4% of the 38 million white collar workers in the U.S. workforce.

Erwin Stanton, writing in the Personnel Journal, cites four major reasons for the intensification of labor union interest in white collar workers:²⁵

- a) the loss of (blue collar) members,
- b) the decline in the percentage of blue collar workers in the workforce,
- c) substantial increases in the numbers of office, technical, service and professional workers in the workforce,
- d) the need of unions to increase their membership base to remain economically and politically influential.

As further evidence of union interest, Stanton notes the statements of key union leaders such as Paul Jennings,

president of the International Union of Electrical Workers (I.U.E.) and Douglas Fraser, a U.A.W. vice president.

Jennings contends that "the future life and growth of the labor movement lies with the unionization of the professional, technical and salaried workers".²⁶ In 1963, the president of the Office and Professional Workers International Union suggested that, "there is no question of the fact that office and professional workers will soon be completely organized".²⁷

While there are white collar organization changes in the private sector they represent but a pale shadow of the activities evident in the realm of public sector employment. Cohany and Dewey report that between 1956 and 1968 union membership in the U.S. public sector rose from 915,000 to 2,155,000, an increase of over 135%.²⁸ During the same period between two and three million additional government employees joined associations.

C. The Historical Profile of Canadian Unionism

In many respects the growth pattern of the labor movement in Canada was similar to that which emerged in the United States. (See Table 1-6) U.S. leadership and the extension of U.S. unions, through affiliations and financial assistance from below the border, have tended to mold Canadian unions in the American image. While the proportions are changing slightly, most Canadian union members

belong to international unions. (See Table 1-7) Many of these Canadian unions continue to depend on U.S. affiliations for consultation, guidance, research and in some cases financial assistance.²⁹

Table 1-6

Union Workforce as a Percentage of Non-Agricultural Workforce - Canada

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1940	16.3	1962	30.2
1945	24.2	1964	29.4
1950	29.2	1966	30.7
1955	33.7	1968	33.1
1960	32.3	1970	33.6

Source: Labour Organizations in Canada, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour, Queens Printer, Ottawa. (1971)

In the eyes of some, this dependence on U.S. development has had a steep price. It includes loss of control, the inability to freely address the relevant issues in the Canadian economy and constraints which prevent the Canadian labor movement from developing to meet member needs.²⁹ Evaluation of this interdependence is less important here than the recognition that it exists and tends to exert some influence on the development of Canadian unions and their policies, as well as, government legislation.

Table 1-7

Union Membership by Type of Union - Canada

Year	International Unions	National Unions	Directly Chartered and Local Unions	Independent Local Organization
1965				
No.	1,124,741	389,746	26,655	47,613
%	70.8	24.5	1.7	3.0
1966				
No.	1,219,482	445,163	25,191	46,004
%	70.2	25.6	1.5	2.7
1967				
No.	1,272,884	575,663	24,885	47,245
%	66.3	29.9	1.3	2.5
1968				
No.	1,345,331	590,260	23,215	50,927
%	66.9	29.4	1.2	2.5
1969				
No.	1,346,114	648,887	22,201	56,414
%	65.0	31.3	1.0	2.7
1970				
No.	1,359,346	752,373	15,248	46,140
%	62.5	34.6	.7	2.1

Source: Labour Organizations in Canada, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour, 1965-70, Queens Printer, Ottawa.

Canadian legislation has paralleled American developments. With the exception of some unique clauses to accommodate the provincial jurisdictions and some carry-over from the British system, there are few differences. The Industrial Disputes Acts (1925 and 1970) are similar in many respects to the Railway Labor Act (1926) which emerged to deal with public disputes in the U.S. rail industry. Many of the provincial labor acts embody concepts borrowed from

the Labor-Management Relations Act (the Wagner Act - 1935) and later from the Taft-Hartley Act (1947).

Union activities in Canada reached a peak following the First World War. However, from 1919 well into the 1930's, membership dwindled and it was not until 1935, when the C.I.O. was in its formative stages, that the fortunes of Canadian unions turned up. By 1937, union membership reached 383,492, surpassing the previous high of 1919. The C.I.O., with an office in Toronto, became an important factor for many Canadian workers seeking industrial unionism. As a result of the emphasis the C.I.O. placed on its Canadian operations, growth in this field kept pace with that in the U.S.

Canadian unionism faced major problems of internal unity and these were complicated by the dissension between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. In 1938, President William Green asked that the C.I.O. affiliated unions be separated from the Trades and Labour Congress (T.L.C.) in Canada, but the Canadian Convention reaffirmed its unity policy. Subsequent pressure from the A.F.L. resulted in membership suspension of the C.I.O. unions in Canada, although convention approval was not easily obtained. It was in this setting that Canada went to war in 1939. To the extent that white collar workers were organized they played no significant role; to the extent that they were involved it was an involvement

without any special recognition because the times demanded that unionists, by definition, were similar.

Union progress, during and immediately following the war, had no significant white collar involvement. The trade union movement in Canada emerged from the war period with increased strength. However, the events which followed the cessation of hostilities left little doubt that business fully intended to alter the situation in the switch from a wartime to a peacetime economy. The Ford strike, seaman's strikes, and the activities of rubber workers, loggers, textile workers and steelmen gave the labor scene a chaotic appearance. Government and business sought to blame communism. Red-baiting became a favorite tactic for obscuring the needs of change. By 1948, union membership in Canada had almost reached the one-million mark. Wages were rising, hours were down and union unity brought the promise of further gains. This period also marked the beginning of an era when the problems of the white collar worker began to emerge in union discussions. Unorganized and without tangible identity, the white collar worker had long been dependent on management making all of the wage and employment decisions. The rising tide of unionism following the Second World War marked the beginning of the period when the wage and fringe gap between white and blue collar workers began to close. In its wake rose the first signs of white collar dissatisfaction with their traditional employment

relationship.

1. Canadian White Collar Unionism

In the early 1950's, when it became evident that the blue collar workforce was declining as a percentage of the total non-agricultural workforce, there was renewed interest on the part of unions in the forgotten white collar worker. But it was largely academic since the white collar workers were not joining unions. In the long established white collar unions, such as the Railway Clerks, and the Retail Clerks, real growth was not evident. It remained for later legislative breakthroughs to pave the way to new membership gains and these were mainly in the public sector.³¹

Since 1961, union membership figures in Canada, as a percentage of the labor force, have shown a static picture with some minor gains evident in 1969 and 1970. Union membership during the ten year period ending in 1970 has grown approximately 50%, while growth in selected white collar unions ranges between 35% for the Retail, Wholesale Employees Union, to over 250% for the Retail Clerks International Union and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. (See Table 1-8)

These figures would seem to indicate that some white collar groups were shedding their prior reluctance to form unions. It is important to note that the figures indicate

significant gains have taken place in both the government ranks and among employees in the private sector. But, of equal importance is the fact that many of the white collar gains are built on extremely small membership bases, leaving the overall impact of white collar organization, at least in the private sector, an insignificant factor to date. Employees of the major white collar employers in Canada such as the banks, insurance companies, large retailers and the offices of large manufacturing and service firms had not, as of this writing, engaged in significant organizing activities.

Everett Kassalow, observing that private sector unionization has proceeded much less impressively than that in the public service, suggested that something extra will be needed to encourage private sector organization.

The legislation and policies which, beginning in the 1930's, helped produce mass unionism among manual workers in both our countries (Canada and the United States) were eventually judged inadequate when it came to the public employee. The response in both countries has been a wave of special legislation and/or executive orders aimed at encouraging, indeed promoting public sector unionism....I am becoming convinced that if unionism of white collar employees in the private sector is to make similar progress, some new public policies designed to encourage it might be in order.³²

Although some union leaders including George Meany, Walter Reuther and James Carey spoke of the growing importance of the white collar worker and the need to bring him into organized labor, the sixties saw little in the way of

Table 1-8

Membership Growth in Selected White Collar Unions, 1961-1970

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1970</u>
Total Union Membership	1,447,000	1,589,000	1,921,000	2,173,000
Retail Wholesale Employees	17,000	17,000	17,500	23,000
Retail Clerks International	8,240	12,326	18,174	26,598
Office Employees International	5,520	6,956	9,666	11,604
Canadian Union of Public Employees	46,033	84,847	106,060	136,127
Public Service Alliance*			92,800	120,000

* Prior to 1967 the Public Service Alliance was made up of the Civil Service Association and the Civil Service Federation. Since Amalgamation it has affiliated with the Labour Congress.

Source: Labour Organization in Canada, The Economics and Research Branch Canada Department of Labour, 50th, 54th, 56th & 59th editions, Queens Printer, Ottawa.

concerted action in the U.S. labor movement. In fact, it remained for the Teamster's Union to take the lead in private sector white collar organizing. In Canada, the picture was different with strong evidence of a unique Canadian approach emerging in the early 1960's. The Canadian Labour Congress took some direct action in coordinating those unions which had white collar members, along with those which expressed some interest in white collar membership. At the Fourth Constitutional Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress in

Vancouver (1962) a resolution was put forth supporting the establishment of a central organizing committee for white collar workers.³³ The convention approved a structure and policy for organizing white collar workers. Its tentative policies, now altered with experience, dealt with staffing, training, promotional material and jurisdictional questions. In addition, the resolution specified that, "No major program of literature should be undertaken until an initial survey of white collar attitudes is available".³⁴

In August of 1962, the Executive Council of the Congress established a new standing committee, the National Committee on White Collar Organization, which was comprised of representatives of each affiliate interested in white collar organization. Thus began a concerted effort by the C.L.C. to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of white collar organizing. Training at specially developed courses and white collar conferences resulted in the development of an approach for the initial undertaking. Professor Frumhartz, of the University of Ottawa, was asked to survey white collar attitudes on unionization and his study, while not a blueprint for strategy and tactics, provided the Congress with a detailed impression of the white collar profile.³⁵ In January 1965, the Committee held an Ontario Provincial Conference of white collar local unions and the resulting enthusiasm became the basis for increased activities in this area.³⁶ It remained to be seen if, in the intervening

time, the studies and the growing recognition of "need" could provide effective guidelines for enrolling the target member. Was there a new strategy for organization or just a faint hope that things had changed to the point where the old approach would now work?

From the outset the Committee recognized the formidable task it faced in organizing the white collar workers. With little to go on, organizers were confronted with conflicting data. In a paper, Lawrence Sefton, Chairman of the White Collar Organizing Committee, explored several "myths" of white collar organization. In order to do so, he divided the white collar sector into five categories or groups:³⁷

- a) Finance
- b) Public Service
- c) Retail Trade
- d) Offices directly associated with production facilities
- e) Those who work side by side with production workers

For Sefton, the myth that white collar workers remain aloof from trade unionism disintegrated when looking at four of the five categories. Only in the area of finance, an industry employing approximately 240,000, had organization been stymied. In his opinion, the other areas represented part of a groundswell to join trade unionism. The growing involvement of government employees and other professionals, Sefton

contended, supported his contention that white and blue collar workers had the same needs.³⁸ The unions, while they must be selective in their approach to these white collar groups, were ultimately faced with many problems that were similar to those they serviced in their blue collar dealings. In fact, Sefton, as well as others in the union movement and outside it, felt that the issues of automation, changing office structures and wage-security pressures were likely to place white collar needs well within the traditional experience of the union movement.³⁹ Nothing was so evident as the unfortunate conflict of interests within the organizing committee. There were those who believed that white collar workers were similar to the blue and the traditional approach would work. Others felt there was a difference, but could find no ready means within their grasp to identify and exploit it.

What were the results of white collar organization in Canada? Apart from some of the more newsworthy breakthroughs, such as the certification in Montreal of approximately one-thousand employees of the Montreal District Savings and Trust Company, white collar organization has not been impressive in any of the private sectors Sefton identified. In the public sector the story was different. Many in the unions hoped that this breakthrough would aid private sector organizers. The public sector organization has come rapidly on the heels of legislation permitting union organization in

the government service. Envious of this activity some organizers shared Everett Kassalow's feeling that progress in the private sector was also dependent on legislative change, change that would make the process of joining a union less sensitive to management manipulation.⁴⁰

The evidence clearly indicated that current growth in white collar organization, in fact current growth in the union movement as a whole, stemmed mainly from increases due to organization successes in the public sector. Private sector organization, while increased, has not kept pace with the growth in the labor force. Despite this, however, union organizers can and do point to specific groups who have joined or affiliated as evidence that the myths, if they ever existed, are changing.

2. Current Activities in Canadian White Collar Organization

What are the major problems facing the white collar organizer in Canada? Several stand out as critical and, while no one situation exhibits all, there is a recurring theme.⁴¹ Technological change represents a key factor in the union's strategy. There is little question that it is taking place in the office, however its impact on present employees is questionable. Few white collar workers fear this type of change and management seldom lets the full impact of such change fall on the shoulders of existing employees. Rather, the policies adopted, shift the brunt

of this change into a reduction of new hires. New jobs are not created. For the unions this results in a membership problem, but for present employees it seldom poses a threat to job security.

The wage issue, increasing blue collar incomes relative to the incomes of white collar employees, apparently fails to impress the white collar employee.⁴² Either the white collar employee does not believe it is happening, or he perceives his wage and fringe benefits package as superior to that received by the blue collar worker. Whatever the perception, the fact that the white collar worker would like more income and improved fringe benefits certainly doesn't separate him from his organized colleagues, at least not in a way that provides the unions with significant organizing advantages.

What of the unions who organize white collar workers in Canada? Lawrence Sefton, Chairman of the C.L.C.'s White Collar Committee, comprised of 26 unions, has stated:

The most critical organizational challenge facing the labour movement today is the challenge of the white collar worker. We have talked about it for years, we have announced a variety of schemes and programmes. In truth we have accomplished more than many of us recognize; but we have not been as successful as we may have wished to be nor as meaningful as we must be.⁴³

What are these schemes? Have they been successful?

Do they indicate that organized labor has found an approach

that might work in the private sector?

There is little doubt that postwar approaches to the white collar worker were usually poorly planned extensions to the blue collar organizing strategy. In the late 1950's when growth in the white collar workforce was coupled with a downturn in blue collar membership growth, new organizing tactics seemed mandatory. It was at this time that the statistics began to indicate a deterioration in benefit comparisons between the white collar worker and his blue collar counterpart. The wage gap was closing and improvements to fringe benefits accrued to the blue collar worker. In some of the non-economic areas the unions managed to question traditional management rights, often to the advantage of the bargaining unit. Following this period, union organizers developed an approach based on the growing economic disadvantage that was the lot of unorganized white collar workers. It didn't work. Study after study suggested that wages and fringe benefits were an important factor for all employed people but apparently, no more so for the unorganized than for the organized.⁴⁴ The economic issues had to be dealt with but the breakthrough in private sector organizing was evidently going to be kindled on more substantial stuff. In the late sixties a new emphasis was articulated - the "we need you and you need us" - approach. While it also contained much of the traditional package, it began with the broad appeal that effective democracy demanded a balance of

power within its structure and unions represented a democratic offset to privately owned capital in our system.

....If there is no significant increase in the numbers of white collar workers joining unions, then the labour movement as we know it will cease to be the spokesman for labour - it will merely be the spokesman for one small, shrinking part of it. The political and economic strength of the labour movement will decline proportionately....⁴⁵

Further, Burris Ormsby stated:

....if he (the white collar worker) remains unorganized then he is a threat to the strength and very existence of the trade union movement.⁴⁶

And there was a second reason Ormsby put forth - one aside from "the purely selfish, self protective one we have just spoken of":

....The white collar workers are unorganized workers who need the protection of a union - they need the security and progress that can only be obtained by collective bargaining. Regardless of the colour of their collars they are workers, and as workers they have the same needs as all other workers....⁴⁷

Claude Edwards, speaking to a white collar personnel-management seminar stated:

Given that democratic decision-making is a good thing, it follows that it is desirable in an economic sphere and that lack of unionization among large numbers of white collar and manual workers is a matter for serious concern. For as long as groups of employees are unrepresented in this decision making, both inside and outside the firm, the process and structure of democracy is less complete.⁴⁸

In addition to a change in the general approach, several issues, none of them very new, were appearing more often as reasons for white collar workers wanting to join the union movement. These were:

- a) Growth in the white collar workforce
- b) Diminished Job Security
- c) Automation

Growth in the white collar area has brought with it many of the circumstances that typically enhance labor's possibilities for organizing. Russell Bell, Director of Research for the C.L.C., has stated:

The average white collar worker, once regarded as an elite member of the labour force, is no longer regarded as such. His time has come and it has come because of the marked changes which have taken place in his role in our work society. He no longer enjoys the intimate and close relationship with the boss that his predecessors did, or at least imagined that they did. In times past, the white collar employee was much less numerous, indeed, was relatively scarce compared with non-white collar workers. As we know this is no longer the case. While he was in a small minority, he easily achieved an economic and social status denied to his far more numerous non-white collar counterpart.⁴⁹

Fortune in an article entitled "The Fraying White Collar" added support to Mr. Bell's conclusions. The article noted that, "Once an elite, office workers now are hired and fired by platoons". Elsewhere Fortune stated:

Now that they are needed by the millions, white collar workers are also expendable. The lifetime sinecure is rapidly disappearing as management experts figure out yet another way to streamline the job, get in another machine, and cut down the overhead. William Gomberg, the former union official and now a professor at the Wharton School of Finance, says, "White collars are where administrators look to save money, for places to fire. It is the law of supply and demand. Once you're in big supply you're a bum". When an unprofitable division is closed or a big contract slips away to a competitor, layoffs are measured in thousands, and the workers usually hit

the streets with no more severance benefits than management feels willing and able to provide.⁵⁰

Currently, emphasis on the issues of job security (break-down in traditional office structures, automation and increasing layoffs in the white collar sector) dominates union thinking. Although it is not clear that these are the issues which cause people to consider the union option, they are issues that can be addressed in a very tangible way. Union organizers admit that because job security is currently handled by attrition it is more of an issue for those yet to be hired.

There is another issue, status, that confuses the organizers. On one hand, unions have emphasized to their blue collar workers the numerous changes in job content and job benefits that have taken place due to organization, changes which have eroded the relative position and status of the white collar worker. Something of the reverse is embodied in the white collar organizer's suggestion that the white collar worker can only preserve his present position by joining the union. The approach attempts to present issues with which the union has had experience, while emphasizing the possible impact of current changes on white collar status. Oddly enough, the approach has not been evident or necessary in the public sector. In the private sector there is no indication yet that the approach has met with much success.

While the history of the white collar worker is relatively short and almost devoid of the events characterizing blue collar unionism, the group has received some attention in the literature. Professor Everett Kassalow, of the University of Wisconsin, has made several studies of white collar unionism.⁵¹ He has suggested that in the early stages of unionization white collar workers were prone to organize if their work situation placed them in close proximity with organized manual workers or, if they were bound up in a rule structure (i.e. The Railway Labor Act) similar to many situations facing their blue collar counterparts. The success of union organizers among postal workers indicated to Kassalow that where an employee was faced with a large bureaucratic structure there was a loss of identity prompting an interest in unionism. Uniform job classifications tended to enhance the prospects of union organization. In the area of entertainment and the newspaper field, according to Kassalow, the key issue, causing organization, was the infringement on the workers professional status and the protection of professional standards.

It would appear that opinions and research, such as those presented by Kassalow, coupled with evidence of office growth and the emergence private sector bureaucracies, are currently guiding the organizing approach to white collar people.

Additional considerations have arisen for the white collar organizer. For example, technology has altered many white collar jobs minimizing the discernible differences between office work and the tasks of many blue collar workers.⁵² White collar workers have witnessed the emergence of shiftwork and an apparent downgrading in the importance of many white collar jobs. Management's practice of tying salary increases to the gains negotiated by the unions for blue collar workers has led some white collar workers to believe that management viewed the two groups in much the same way. There is some evidence that the breakdown of office structures and the disruption of conventional lines of promotion have led to a strong sense of insecurity.⁵³ Many of the jobs created by the acquisition of new equipment and office systems require lower skills and offer significantly less challenge for the majority of white collar workers.⁵⁴

Poor communications between white collar employees and management have caused some of the problems. Management's growing use of staff specialists and a generally enlarged management organization structure have increased the distance between the white collar employee and his boss. These changes have separated traditional groups, interfered with grievance handling, affected communication and raised serious questions about the benefits of white collar individualism. Thus many unions are exhibiting a new interest in the white

collar worker and have provided a sometimes attractive alternative to the traditional white collar association with management, an alternative which they hoped would attract a growing number of white collar employees in the future.⁵⁵

No doubt, from a review of both the historical setting and the current activities of white collar workers, unions and managements are confronted with significant change. The statistics, growth of the white collar group and public sector organizing, and the issues, changing company structures, job security, technological change and wages and fringe benefits, indicate a new era for private sector white collar workers. But so far, union attempts to capitalize on these changes have not proven fruitful. Neither new organizing methods nor variations on old methods have produced the desired results. Much in the literature suggests to the organizers that the time is right. Little in the achievements to date supports such optimism. It is the study of these apparent contradictions that provides the focus for this research.

II. The Research Study: Its Purpose and Scope

This study seeks to provide additional insights into the reasons why white collar workers join and do not join unions. Professor John T. Dunlop, in his analysis of labor theories, set down four criteria as essential to a meaningful theory.⁵⁶ Three dealt with union organizations; one

dealt with the people who join them. It is this latter concern - why people join - that underlies the research into private sector, white collar organizing.

Seymour Lipset, commenting on white collar employees' attitudes toward unions, stated:

Given the paucity of research, it is not yet possible to know to what extent the attitudinal differences among (white collar) employees are associated with the objective variations in the work environment that correlate for support for unions.⁵⁷

In fact, most writers engaged in the study of non-professional, white collar workers have written mainly on the basis of personal opinion. The opinions, well supported by practice and experience, often lack the backing of accepted research techniques.⁵⁸ Research on the relationship between the needs of white collar employees and their propensity to organize is scarce. Causal research in the same area is non-existent.

Considerable energy has been expended on investigating the relationships between job factors and job satisfaction, and job factors and productivity.⁵⁹ But little has been done to relate such job factors as income, fringe benefits, job challenge and interest, management style and organization structure to the individual's interest in union membership. There is a twofold purpose to the study. The first is to investigate some of the possible relationships between job factors such as company size, company rules and growth, and personal factors such as age, level of education, father's

occupation and the individual's propensity to join and remain in unions.⁶⁰ The second purpose is to investigate some of the reasons for white collar reluctance to join the union movement.

The study had as its objective the exploration of quantitative data relating some of the factors that impact on the individual white collar worker's propensity to join unions, and the decision to do so. The practical application of such research arises from the identification of those variables most often associated with high and low propensities for unionism and the potential actions which might affect these variables.

The general research question was, why do white collar employees join unions? To address this question it was restated. Did those white collar employees who had a high propensity for unionism exhibit different characteristics toward job, company and management than those who had a low propensity for unionism? And, if so, were the characteristics which were most often associated with either state, items which could be influenced by managements, unions or governments?

Why do the research? What contribution might arise from a study of the private sector, white collar employee in London, Ontario? What was missing from either the

literature or practice that might, in some way, be more complete if the study achieved its objectives?

This investigation was conducted among non-professional, male white collar employees in the private sector. The study was prompted by three factors, all of which seemed highly questionable. First there was the frequent assumption that most white collar employees have needs and aspirations similar to those of the blue collar workforce.⁶¹ Typically, this resulted in blue collar organizers using blue collar strategy, offering membership to white collar workers in union locals dominated by blue collar membership.

Second, there was the assumption, held by some, that white collar employees are bound to the employer by ties similar to those binding management personnel. This assumed that the service offered by unions was unnecessary and interest in unionism could be discouraged by merely maintaining this perceived relationship.

And finally, there was evidence that the union movement had made little headway with the non-professional, white collar worker in the private sector while significant gains had been made in the area of public employment.

With the new union emphasis on organizing the private sector and the success of organizers in the public sector,

these issues and assumptions seem to justify reappraisal.

This was made even more apparent when a review of the literature produced neither systematic nor current research in the area.

When designed, the study was not meant to be extensive in scope. Rather, it was aimed at exploring, in one setting, some of the many conflicting reasons for white collar organizing successes and failures. Further, it was designed to do this in a way that had not been exploited in prior studies. The study treated white collar employees across a propensity-to-join dimension rather than a union-non-union grouping. The latter, for various reasons, tends to produce a mixed response to the organizing question.⁶²

A search of the literature produced many studies of white collar workers that sought to be all encompassing and in the opinion of some included such diverse groups that the major findings were rendered unproductive.⁶³ This study narrowed the contact group and constrained the area of coverage to avoid this criticism.

No attempt was made to compare blue collar workers with those of the white collar segment although the history of unionism, essentially a blue collar development, makes some comparison unavoidable. Quite specifically, the sample selection process sought to compare white collar

workers, some organized some not, across personal, environmental and job dimensions. The broad research question centered around whether or not these characteristics varied from high to low propensity groups and, if so, in what specific ways? The practical question had as its focus the relationship between environment, job and personal characteristics, and the individual's propensity for unionism. Could these characteristics be affected to either maintain or create an interest in union membership or, conversely, to maintain or create a passive or negative attitude toward union membership?

Footnotes - Chapter I

1. Unless otherwise noted, the term white collar employee or white collar worker in this research, refers to non-professional, white collar employees in the private sector. A more complete definition can be found later in Chapter I.
2. Labour Organizations in Canada, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour Ottawa, 1972.
3. These estimates include some public sector employees, particularly in Quebec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.
4. Hayashi, J., "White Collar Roundup: GLC to Test if Office Workers Can be Organized", London Free Press, June 20, 1971
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60. The term high propensity, is defined as the general attitude held by those respondents with a favorable predisposition toward unions and union membership. Low propensity, is defined as the general attitude held by those respondents with an unfavorable predisposition toward unions and union membership.
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51

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CHAPTER II

THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM: A SETTING FOR WHITE COLLAR DEVELOPMENT

Union development in the private sector has taken place without significant white collar involvement. Target groups have not joined in spite of substantially increased organizing efforts. Agreement among Canadian unions to act in concert has not produced predicted breakthroughs. In fact, white collar organizing has been unimpressive except in the public sector.

There have been few studies of the white collar worker in unions. None have systematically analyzed the broad spectrum of problems involved in the process of organizing white collar employees.

The evolution and growth of unions has received a great deal of attention from students of labor and industrial relations. The theories which emerged, as expected, were blue collar in orientation, although some speak to the general issues confronting all workers. Others, by conscious design, would seem to exclude white collar involvement. At least one, a system's approach, was sufficiently broad

that its parameters can include the concerns of many white collar employees in the job environment.*

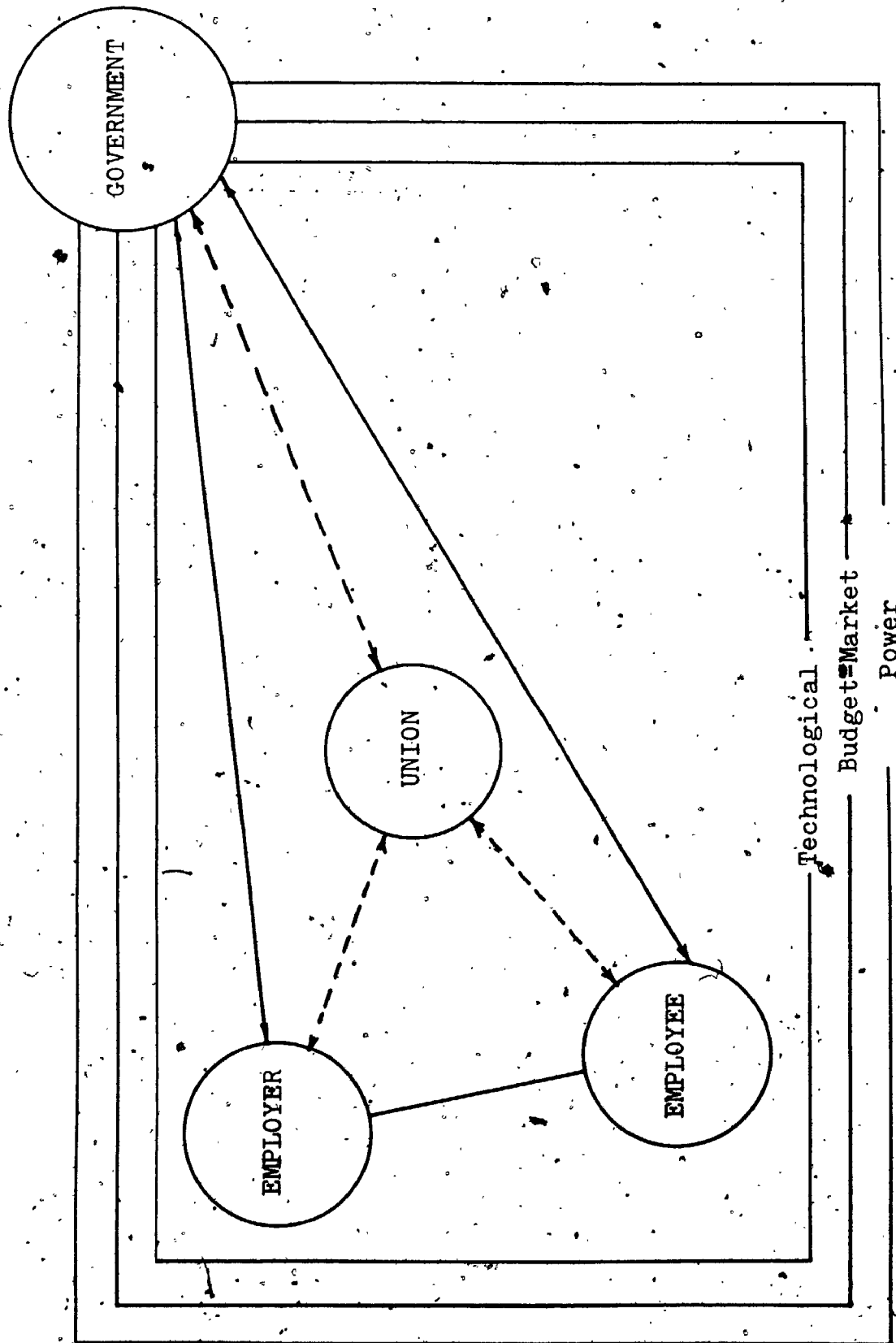
The system description, as articulated by Dunlop⁶⁴, is broad in scope and can encompass a variety of industrial, geographical, sociological and ideological variations. Based on this scope, the Dunlop model was chosen to integrate the disparate data of white collar developments in the private sector.

I. The Dunlop Model: Its Purpose in the Research

The involvement of white collar workers with unions and union membership is not a simple matter. Many variables interact to influence the actions of both groups and individuals. The systemic approach, proposed by Dunlop (see Figure 2-1), permits the logical exploration of some key variables associated with the decisions of white collar people to join unions. More important, it facilitates an exploration of those variables within the constraints of the system's context.

In addition to the analytical components, the Dunlop

*John Dunlop in his book, Industrial Relations Systems, described a number of situations around which he developed an analytical framework for interpreting systems' functioning and development. For the study his framework will be referred to as the Dunlop model or the model, as distinct from industrial relations systems which constituted the subject of Dunlop's extensive investigations.



The Industrial Relations System

Figure 2-1

framework can be used to deal with the integrative process of generating meaningful options for the white collar worker. This integrative component of the model provided a second major reason for using the Dunlop approach to the labor relations sub-system. Specifically, Dunlop's model provided a framework for:

- i) analyzing the relevant historical data on white collar growth and development,
- ii) identifying past and potential roles for the system's actors in the process of influencing change,
- iii) identifying change in the system and its affect on white collar employees,
- iv) generating and testing hypotheses,
- v) predicting hypotheses outcomes,
- vi) developing and assessing study implications.

A. Historical Developments

The white collar worker has a long job history which has shaped his relationships, needs and expectations. Current activities, despite radical environmental change, continue to be influenced by the historical evolution of white collar jobs and work places. Comprehending the impact of these developments is central to the understanding of white collar attitudes toward labor organizing and labor organizations. Dunlop's model facilitates the interpretation of these historical events, providing perspective to the situation currently facing white collar workers.

B. Roles and Actors

Within the existing system both the actors and their roles must change to accomodate white collar unionism if it is to succeed. Traditionally, the white collar role has been submerged. In most references the white collar role appears as one strongly affiliated with management, although there are instances where the affiliation is to the blue collar group. To provide a separate identity for the white collar worker, in what to date has been essentially a blue collar system, substantial change will have to take place.

The actors, or system participants, also can be studied in the contexts that affect their actions and relations to each other. White collar workers, unions and their organizations, management and their organizations, and governments and their agencies, interact to establish the rules which govern system activities, expectations and options. The model provides a base for describing the changes which are taking place, the impact on existing relationships and a benchmark for speculating on emergent developments in the labor setting.

C. System Change Process

In any system the process of change may have as great an impact as the change itself. The process of change in the industrial relation setting will be influenced by both the structure of the system and the participants who populate it.

Dunlop's model provided a base for appraising change in the industrial relations setting and the impact of change on those involved. Altering the contexts often provides new latitude, as well as new constraints, to the activities of the participants. The sharing of roles and the changes in role sharing both affect, and are affected by, changes in the system and its contexts. It is, however, in these changes that white collar employees may find both a role and new associations in the industrial relations setting, associations which could facilitate future organization.

D. Hypotheses Generation

The primary thesis question centers around why white collar workers join unions. Secondly, but none the less important, are the obvious adjuncts which consider current organizing conditions.

Many factors influence the individuals need to associate with unions. The model, a web of relationships and constraints, provided a comprehensive vehicle for identifying both individual and interrelated factors which have impacted on the joining decision. It was these variables, in context, that provided a basis for hypotheses generation and data analysis.

E. Outcome Predictions

Expected outcomes emerge from the readily available

options within the system. For the white collar worker past and present experience has severely limited the acceptable options for union membership. In the past, it was not at all clear that the white collar worker had any meaningful membership options. Nor is it yet clear that the option of joining best meets the needs of those in a position to consider it. Understanding what must change within the system, before white collar organization becomes a reality, is essential to meaningful predictions. Dunlop's model analytical in its intent, provided a systematic approach for arranging data, establishing options and predicting outcomes in the white collar setting.

F. Data Analysis and Implications

The model provided a vehicle for analyzing the data of industrial relations and developing its implications for the system's participants. Further, it provided a framework for integrating disparate and often conflicting facts, permitting a better understanding of their relationship to the actions and reactions of those who function within the industrial relations system.

II. Dunlop's Model: Analyzing Industrial Relations Systems

What influences a worker's decision to join the union? Can a high propensity for unionism be turned into a dues paying member? Can the process of joining be identified in a way that the decision to join can be understood and

influenced? Dunlop's model, a systemic approach to industrial relations analysis, is presented here in some detail. It will be used as a vehicle for exploring these and other questions posed by the research.

Professor John Dunlop in his book Industrial Relations Systems dealt exclusively with blue collar situations, but the model he developed for these investigations encompassed breadth not previously envisioned in the writings of the labor theorists.⁶⁵ On the surface at least, the concept of an Industrial Relations System, as put forth by Dunlop, permitted a multifaceted investigation of the white collar worker. Dunlop's model looked at the contexts of the job (technological, budget-market and power) the individuals or actors who fill the various jobs within the system, and the rules and ideologies which attempted to bind personal, corporate and government objectives together, to produce positive outcomes for each.

A. The Industrial Relations System

The framework provided by Dunlop permitted the industrial relations system (and its sub-systems) to be viewed in terms of a number of interacting variables. As Dunlop points out:

The concept of an industrial relations system is deliberately variable in scope; it may be used to characterize an immediate workplace, an enterprise, a sector, or country as a whole. The group cannot be arbitrary or capricious; the work places and the

actors, at varying levels, that are grouped together must reflect a considerable degree of cohesiveness and formal interdependence.⁶⁶

Without assuming economic, psychological or social rationales, the system's approach provides for extensive consideration of these variables as part of a broader cause-effect relationship that influences the emergence and development of industrial relations in a particular setting. As Dunlop notes, "The scope of the hierarchies of the actors, their prescribed relations, the actual technology, and markets or budgets, and the rules which they establish are different. But the logic of a system does not alter with its scope".⁶⁷ Thus, while the author did not deal directly with white collar actors in his considerations, he suggested that the system's scope was sufficiently general to encompass white collar considerations.

Basic to Professor Dunlop's model of the industrial relations system are the following components:

1. The Contexts, within which the system's actors must function included:

- i) the technological context
- ii) the market-budget context
- iii) the power context

2. The Actors, which included:

- i) white collar workers
- ii) unions

iii) managements and their organizations

iv) governments and government agencies.

3. The Rules, which were established by the actors to guide both actors and actions within the system.

4. The broad Ideologies which provided a continuing rationale for the system's existence.

B. The System's Contexts

Professor Dunlop set down three broad contexts within which an industrial relations system functions. These included the technological context, the market-budget context and the power context. Each affected the actions of the white collar worker and, in turn, was affected by white collar actions.

1. The Technological Context in the White Collar Setting

The technical context of the job included the type of work and workplace and the effect of these on the actors and actions within the system. These have, Dunlop suggested, "... far reaching consequences for the industrial relations system, influencing the form of management and employee organization, the problems posed for supervision, many of the features of the required labor force, and the potentialities of public regulation".⁶⁸ The capacity of the actors to shut down operations by withdrawing strategic services was highly dependent upon the technical context. The relative capacities (the worker's ability to shut down

operations and management's ability to resist shutdown in the face of service withdrawal) both influenced and shaped participant relations within the system.

What are the technological contexts constraining the white collar job? Are they changing? What affect do they have on white collar workers, their managements and the unions who are actively seeking white collar involvement in the movement?

It is useful to begin by recognizing that the constraints facing the broad group of jobs encompassed by the white collar, non-professional workers varied widely, however, in general, the major trends seem to affect most job categories.⁶⁹ This was certainly true of the white collar groups currently attracting union organizers' attention. They faced technical contexts that forced a common level of problems on a significant number of white collar employees. The problems, and their rising commonality in the group, could provide a basis for communication among white collar workers, drastically altering past patterns which have isolated common interest groups.

What are the technological contexts constraining the white collar job? Without question the key technological change involved the mechanization and automation of office jobs. Added to the fact that these changes have taken place,

was the complicating factor of time. Almost all of the significant changes have taken place since the end of World War II, with the major changes dating from the general advent of commercial computer usage in the late 50's and the early 60's. New jobs have emerged requiring new skills.⁷⁰ Older jobs, wide in the variety of work they offered, have been narrowed and, in some cases, reduced to a repetition of actions normally associated with factory jobs.⁷¹ Many jobs have disappeared completely.⁷² Some white collar jobs, once offering mobility within the work setting, as well as, a high level of social interaction have been severely constrained. Technology has contrived to demand specific skills from large groups such as keypunch operators, order clerks and computer processors. Moreover, these skills often related to only a small part of the total task and were dependent on the inputs of others who played a part in an almost "line like" system.

The technology context has also been altered by changes in office and business communications, many of which have eliminated the need for more traditional skills (i.e. accounting clerks, cost and production control clerks, pricing clerks, etc.). Voice and written communications have changed, altering the jobs of many and eliminating yet others. Computers, tied to the communications equipment, replaced many of the jobs formerly performed by white collar workers. In addition, many of the new jobs, created by

improved processing and communications systems, have been filled by professionally qualified employees. These changes have facilitated both centralization and decentralization. Management has been able to organize, in one central location, large groups of clerical workers for the purpose of processing paperwork. (i.e. insurance offices and central banking functions) The same technology has also permitted the establishment of branch offices tied tightly to a centralized communications system. These jobs, mainly involving input information and service functions, were constrained by the procedures essential to the effective utilization of the system's capital components, the computer and its peripheral equipment. In this process of technology advance, the white collar worker, in many jobs, has lost his job variety and its control, his contact with people, his close relationships with management and, in cases where shiftwork was involved, his "office hours".

Technology has altered skill requirements. Traditionally, job changes were such that existing employees could be readily trained to include them within slightly modified job descriptions. Now with some changes in technology, whole new skill requirements have emerged, requiring basic training and education beyond the capacity of existing white collar employees.⁷³ Further, the high cost of capital equipment involved in many modern white collar jobs dictated an emphasis on utilization and operating efficiency.

(i.e. chemical plants, oil refineries and computer installations.) Such an emphasis drastically reduced both the mobility and the variety that were once available in many white collar jobs.

The technological context has created greater job to job mobility for those who were skilled in the new techniques and the use of new equipment. Since much of the training for the use of new technologies was done within the educational systems it was standard and transferrable, creating for some improved job mobility. At the same time technological change has eliminated job mobility for the white collar worker who lacked the necessary skills to move outside the firm and was faced with contracting job opportunities within. Thus, the technology surrounding many jobs provided new opportunities, but often for different people, compounding both the opportunities open to existing white collar workers and reducing the perceived job security of others. Also, as Ida Hoos has pointed out,⁷⁴ the quality and challenge of jobs created by new technology has declined noticeably, placing many white collar workers in a setting not unlike that confronting the blue collar worker.

Structural changes resulting from new technologies could produce a more favorable attitude towards unionism among white collar workers. Changes in the jobs and workplaces stemming from technical advances have increased the

numbers of technicians. These increases made it difficult for managements to absorb the related costs through slack periods, resulting in insecurity and layoffs similar to those faced by the blue collar worker.⁷⁵ For many, these changes "spelled the loss of the sense of high individuality".⁷⁶ Technological change has had the effect of industrializing the workplace and "for many office, clerical and other white collar workers that process was creating a climate favorable to union organization".⁷⁷ Harrington, in his study of the retail clerks, underlined the importance of such change in job and workplace as an element increasing the acceptance of unionism.⁷⁸ Harrington found that large chain stores exhibited a factory-like atmosphere where the close relationships between manager, clerk and customer disappeared.

Finally, the technological context surrounding many white collar tasks has drastically altered employee control of the job. The automated telephone system that spans the country can be operated indefinitely with only supervisory and management personnel. Information systems can function without clerical and operator attention, particularly where the high labor content jobs have been contracted out. (i.e. using over-the-counter and on-line data centers to keypunch and process payrolls, customer billing, accounts payable and internal performance data) In fact, in many companies, where white collar employees represent large

groups, job control often lay in the hands of blue collar workers such as maintenance men and service personnel. In Dunlop's terms, these white collar groups have little capacity to shutdown operations and thus, limited impact on either future union growth or job security.

For others, typically those with the newer and more sophisticated skills, there was a different picture emerging from the technological context. These employees, often technicians, manipulated and controlled the technology. For them, the more traditional white collar job definition pervaded: job challenge, growth potential, mobility and a degree of security based on skill were very much a part of the job.

For the white collar worker the technological context has created a variety of situations with varying problems and opportunities. In some situations it has created jobs and groups similar to those of many blue collar workers, perhaps situations that union organizers could exploit. In yet other settings, the same contexts have created a new elite, many of whom may seek their job challenge and security through personal initiative, as opposed to, placing the major emphasis on group involvements such as union membership.

2. The Market-Budget Context for White Collar Employees

For an increasing number of white collar employees both the market context and the budget constraint are beginning to exert an increasing effect on relations between and among actors and system. While the study was not explicitly concerned with government white collar workers, government actions, with respect to its white collar workforce, formed a very clear constraint for non-professional, white collar employees in the private sector. No doubt there was a time when government jobs could be separated from those in the private sector in such a way that comparisons were all but meaningless. Now however, with the advent of technological change in the office setting, many similarities arise and government employment practices have become an important factor in the market-budget context of the industrial relations system. No doubt the sheer numbers involved in the government's employ have further complicated the existence and impact of this context on the actions of the private sector. The growth of government employment, mainly white collar in nature, has increased the demand for some types of white collar skills. And, while the supply has adjusted, the competition between government and the private sector for similar skills was increasing. Additionally, government jobs, in some white collar classifications, were setting the standards for both wages and fringe benefits.

Further complicating the impact of the market-budget context on the white collar job scene was the problem of short term skill mis-matches. Many jobs were available for white collar workers in the areas utilizing advanced office technologies. (i.e. computer processors and programmers, technicians and some types of sales persons) Here the supply was inadequate. In yet other areas, the supply of certain types of clerks exceeded the demand. Many companies were engaged in retraining to minimize layoffs and adjust mis-matches.⁷⁹ New growth in some white collar areas was levelling out, suggesting that in the future this type of upheaval may be more difficult to deal with, and unilateral action by management could create job security issues and a possible union role.

The acquisition of capital equipment, in an effort to lower administrative costs, limited both the type and number of new jobs open to white collar employees. The emergence of a sophisticated office technology has put management in a position where cost-benefit analysis was important, bringing the budget constraint into direct contact with white collar job opportunities. The growing use of women in an increasing number of white collar jobs, plus the acceptance of part time employees as a solution to peak load problems, further accentuated the importance of the market-budget context on future white collar job growth and job opportunities.⁸⁰

The nature of skill development within the white collar job setting, where many of the highly skilled now are hired from outside, made the traditional approach of long, job oriented training both expensive and risky. Management's dependence on the long time employee was giving way to the need for greater flexibility. In markets where improved communication and changing technology demanded the introduction of skills at a rate inconsistent with the supply that can be generated in normal on-the-job training, new sources must be exploited. As a result, the question of security and job stability in white collar ranks emerged as a potential issue for white collar workers seeking growth from within the firm.

Management's growing awareness of rising fixed costs has also tended to threaten traditional white collar security. New systems of accounting and control have emphasized the impact and importance of fixed costs, many of which are related to the white collar workforce. The growing need for a variety of decision-making options placed pressure on management to maintain a high variable-to-fixed cost relationships adversely affecting job stability. There was a rising consciousness of the economic disadvantages of keeping people when their skills were outmoded. This was particularly true in industries where their product-service offerings were under constant assault from tough competition. The market-budget context has assumed greater importance as

the relative size of the white collar group increased. Continuing growth in the white collar area will accentuate the impact of this context on white collar jobs.

3. The Power Context for White Collar Employees

John Dunlop in defining his industrial relations system spoke of, "the relative distribution of power among the actors in the larger society", which he said, "tends to a degree to be reflected in the industrial relations system; their prestige, position and access to the ultimates of authority within the larger society shapes the constraints of the industrial relations system".⁸¹ For the white collar worker the full impact of this statement must be viewed in the sense that he has had no significant identity in the existing system.⁸² In the main the white collar worker has been grouped with the management actors. His prestige and his access to the ultimates of authority have been tightly tied to management interests and, in this relationship, both have benefitted. Now there is evidence that many of management's needs and interests were beginning to diverge from those of the white collar group. As a result, the relationship was somewhat more tenuous in many situations. Further complicating the relationship has been management action linking the salaries and fringe benefits of white collar workers to the settlements achieved in blue collar negotiations. Thus the relative power distribution, at least as it affects the

white collar worker, was shifting.

On the other hand, the power of the white collar worker in the private sector may ultimately be greatly enhanced by the progress of white collar workers in the public sector. So far the connection was not evident. Competition in the job market, common job classifications and other bases of commonality between private and public jobs will likely influence the power distribution within the system.

For the white collar worker the power context has been influenced by past developments, relationships and roles. While change was evident in all areas of white collar involvement, constraints based on past experience existed long after the evidence of changed conditions had been well documented. For the white collar worker the power context was influenced by the social, physical and legal constraints that have been a part of historical white collar involvement in the industrial relations system. Rapidly changing conditions were not followed by adjustments in the broad power contexts which influenced the participants' role in the broad system. The relative power sharing in the system has made no apparent shift in favor of private sector, white collar employees in spite of increased numbers and marked shifts in the public sector.

Historically speaking, major moves into the ranks of North American unions seem to have occurred when a combination of cause and opportunity existed simultaneously. Several periods typified this observation. These included the economic hardships of the depression in tandem with a series of favorable legislative moves culminating in the Wagner Act. Again, during the Second World War under the no strike agreements (in Canada, The War Measures Act) unions were widely recognized and the processes of collective bargaining and arbitration gained widespread acceptance.⁸³ And finally, during the 1960's the frustrations of employees in government jobs, coupled with permissive legislation, resulted in a major organizing effort in the public sector. There were, of course, other examples. However, the point, less a hypothesis than an observation, supported the proposition of the Dunlop model, that an opportunity to join must exist before any tangible success in organizing will be evident. Further, the events suggested that an effective opportunity to join has to involve more than a simple right to do so. It involved a series of factors and suggested that when these factors were in phase the chances of organizing were enhanced. Long term adjustment of these factors influenced the power context, resulting in changed legislation, and an adjustment of attitudes.

The factors, for the purpose of this discussion, have been grouped into the following categories:

- i) The social constraints to joining
- ii) The physical constraints to joining
- iii) The legal constraints to joining.

1. The Social Constraints to Joining

While the social constraints to joining a union were more difficult to identify than either the physical or legal constraints, they do exist and there was substantial evidence to suggest that they must be overcome before an effective membership drive will be successful in the private sector. White collar employees' social constraints were slow to change. Bound up in culture, history and experience these will likely change very slowly unless some specific impetus is given by one or another of the system's participants.

Traditional associations, many of them evolving with the developments of the firm, have placed the white collar employee in the management group. The relationship, except in specific settings like the printing industry, and the railways, for example, has resulted in a sharing of management values, one of which was an anti-union bias. The same association has emphasized individual performance, promotion and gain on the basis of merit.

Education has created another social constraint for white collar unionization. The better educated have tended toward white collar jobs. Management, in many cases,

has reinforced this direction by establishing educational requirements for jobs such as bank clerks, technicians and sales personnel.

There was also a cultural component operating as a social constraint for white collar employees. The history of early unionism involving as it did, layoffs, strikes and violence, left many white collar workers with a negative view of union accomplishments. This, together with the security, fringe benefits and work setting enjoyed by white collar workers raised serious questions about the desirability of union involvement for these employees.

Although there were notable exceptions, the major industrial and craft unions neither attempted nor, until recently, showed any interest in white collar organization. As a result, the direct contacts that might have proven fruitful in the private sector went largely unexploited.

Governments, among the largest employers of white collar workers, have traditionally prevented organization. Since World War II many civil servants became members of associations and subsequently, with the emergence of permissive legislation, have joined organized labor. In the opinion of some, this move was among the more important in casting an air of social acceptability over white collar union membership and should, they contended, provide the

wedge necessary to break down some of the barriers of organizing the private sector. Certainly, coincident with their successes in the government field, the broad union movement has significantly increased its interest and commitment toward organizing white collar workers and, in doing so, substantially broadened the opportunities to join.⁸⁴

Another factor hindering white collar organization was the proscription of professionals from membership. In Ontario, most professionals were prevented under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, from becoming members of a labour organization.⁸⁵ Since many white collar employees worked in close proximity with these professionals and, were upward mobile, the inability of this group to join seems to have had a carry-over effect among their subordinates. Recently however, changes in the Labour Relations Act to include engineers and special legislation to include teachers, have broadened the opportunities for those organizing white collar employees. Although so far few have joined there was, among professional engineers for example, considerable sympathy for the inclusion of employer-employee issues within the bounds normally handled by the professional associations. Any move in this direction could have a significant impact on attitudes toward unionism held by the associates of these professional employees, increasing the social legitimacy of joining.

The traditional union emphasis on seniority, limited differentiation between jobs and job classes and the down playing of the merit principle bothered many white collar workers.⁸⁶ Two factors seem evident and likely to make union membership more attractive to white collar workers. First, is the increased emphasis by union organizers on a flexible contract for the union or local. There was a growing acceptance by union organizers for contract provisions designed to meet the needs of particular locals. Examples included performance payments, promotion on the basis of merit and ability and regular job skill updating to keep abreast of new developments. Such changes have been necessary to alleviate the fears of some white collar workers that their jobs and future would be impaired by strict adherence to a standard contract.⁸⁷

Second, the unions, most of which were dominated by blue collar membership, are making a strong effort to put white collar members in a position of self determination. Publicizing the fact that white collar workers, within the union structure, can run their own show while benefitting from the strength and skill of organized labor may satisfy white collar concerns in this area. The major unions have come to recognize the need to accomodate white collar differences. They have added organizers who can communicate and understand the problems of the white collar worker and are hard at work developing appeals and programs for member-

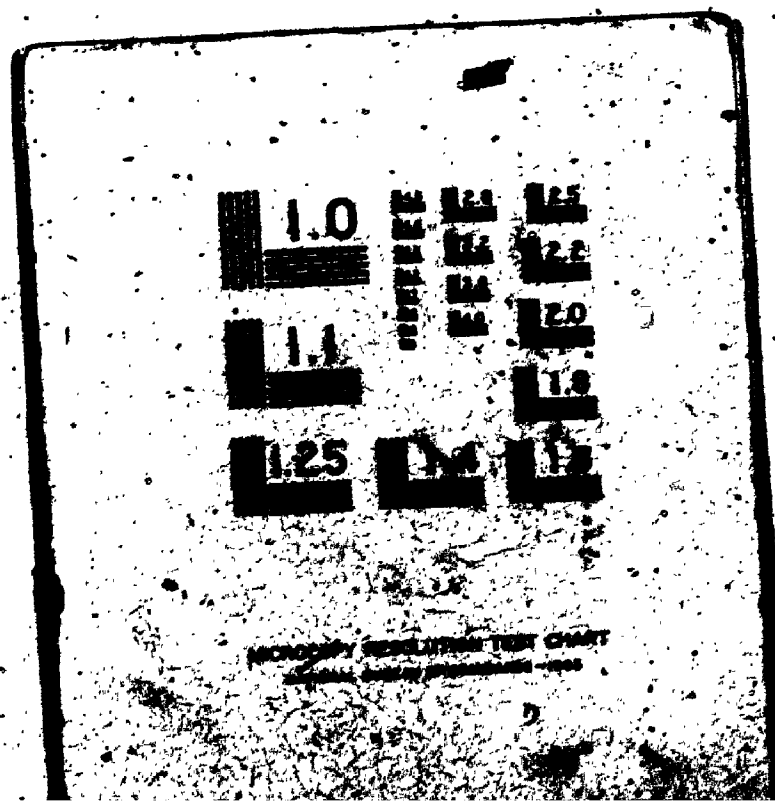
ship drives in the untapped private sector. Beginning as a way to add numbers to a stable membership, the unions seemed to believe that white collar members would join without a change in appeal. Now there is strong evidence that this once passive approach has been turned into an active and aggressive campaign to alter the social constraints and organize the white collar worker.

2. The Physical Constraints to Joining

The major physical constraint facing white collar organizers involved in the private sector remains the size of the work units in which many white collar workers were employed. Traditionally the office size was such that unions could not afford to organize the many units in the private sector. Small office units were easy to monitor and management values were conveniently shared in such a setting, making the offerings of unionism less attractive and the economics of organization impractical. The legal requirement to organize office units in the fashion of industrial unions, within companies as opposed to across companies, often made the task extremely difficult. Certainly the office and staff groups, in many companies where unions have blue collar units, have grown but often this group still constitutes an uneconomic lot size for organization unless it can be integrated into the existing blue collar local. Job differences, dissimilarities in cultural and social backgrounds and even legal obstacles make an integrative approach

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by union organizers untenable to many white collar employees. Even where office and professional workers are organized, their affiliation with industrial unions, union leaders and union objectives was a tenuous affair, characterized by accommodation rather than solidarity.

Managements, through personnel departments and industrial relations functions, have altered the potential involvement of white collar people with unions. Through evolving organizational structures and management styles, management attempts to respond to changing employee needs. Where successful, this tended to lessen the impact of union rationale. Sometimes the threat of unionization has conditioned the management response. At other times, employee policies had as their motivation increased productivity, loyalty to company and management or a reduction in employee absenteeism. All these efforts by management, however motivated, constantly raised the questions of whether, in these "enlightened" times, the role of unions as most know it, was not somewhat outmoded. The question of union role and its effectiveness was not always obvious to white collar workers. Management effectiveness, at least to date, was usually more evident, creating additional barriers to organization. If management can effectively play both a union role and a management role for its white collar workers, at least to the extent where white collar workers see no tangible need for union involvement in their employment

relationship, it presented an additional barrier to organization.

Another constraint to organization is posed by the typical union approach to organizing white collar workers. George Strauss,⁸⁸ pointed out that union attempts to organize white collar workers seemed to fall into one of two categories: (a) the factory union approach which emphasizes the need to induce white collar workers to give up their vain delusions and (b) the middle class approach which presents unionism as the best way to achieve middle class aspirations.

Strauss' study of white collar unions indicated that the factory union approach, one which emphasized hostility toward the boss, has not been notably successful. On the other hand, Strauss felt the middle class approach embodied elements that were consistent with the needs of a joining class. The middle class approach, in his opinion, accommodated the white collar need for status, prestige, independence and initiative without ignoring the critical issues of pay, fringe benefits and security. He also suggested that professionalism can be woven into the fabric of a middle class approach in a way that an industrial unionist, promoting a factory union concept, cannot sell.⁸⁹

For the unions involved, one or another of these

approaches tended to dictate the structural form necessary for attracting white collar workers. Those following what Strauss termed the middle class approach, were either white collar unions or industrial unions that have attempted to clearly delineate their white collar organizing from their blue collar operations. Some industrial unions have formed departments to organize the white collar worker. This move, while designed to bring organizing skills together with some recognition of the differences between white and blue collar employees, ignored the expressed concerns of many in the white collar workforce that their needs were different and few of those with industrial experience can appreciate this. Thus the organization of white collar workers was made physically difficult by the inability of those with union experience to simply extend it into new areas.

The shift of workforce percentages that now favors the white collar worker can be misleading as a base for assessing union growth potential among white collar workers in the private sector. Many of the employment gains have come in the service industries and public employment. In both of these areas traditional unionism has had little influence. In addition, a large percentage of the increased employment in these areas has come from growing numbers of females in the workforce, a group that has shown little inclination for union membership thus far. Each of these

factors added to the physical constraints facing unions in their short run attempts to organize white collar workers in the private sector.

No doubt part of the problem facing both management and unions involved the diversity of the groups included under the white collar label. Finding a viable strategy to organize such diverse groups continues to confound union leaders. And, for management, the problem could be equally serious if the groups and their needs are as divergent as some researchers believe.⁹⁰ For the sake of simplicity and expediency, unions seem to have assumed a similarity that glossed over the central issues. Now there is some evidence of change. White collar unions are beginning to tailor their approaches and appeals to what they believe to be the real concerns of the white collar worker. Management, while expressing concern, often seemed to place undue reliance on the continuation of traditional white collar-management relationships.

The large number of workers who remain outside the union fold continues to confuse the historic rationale for union development. A growing number of white collar jobs lack challenge, changing office structures interfere with traditional social and organizational relationships and, economically, the white collar worker often finds himself the recipient of wage and fringe benefit packages similar to

those negotiated by the union for the firm's blue collar workers. Promotions to management are harder to come by and the new jobs require a degree of specialization dictating outside hiring. Yet no apparent rush to the unions was evident.

3. The Legal Constraints to Joining

Historically, the white collar worker has rejected unionism as a viable force in his employment relationship.

For many reasons, some social and some economic, he had chosen to align himself with management's ideas and objectives, but all of this appears to be undergoing some reconsideration.

Unions have repeatedly cited restrictive laws as a major factor in their inability to organize this segment of the workforce. Certainly, gains in the public sector, coming on the heels of legislative change, added at least some credence to the claim.

Present legislation posed special problems for the white collar organizer for several reasons. Conceived as applying to the blue collar worker, it failed to envision many of the situations faced by organizers in the white collar, private sector. Unions, because of their early attitudes toward the white collar worker, have allowed interpretation and practice to include broad categories of

potential members under managerial and confidential status clauses. The labor relations acts have excluded groups with professional standing or near-professional standing particularly where these employees filled a quasi-management role. To preserve collective bargaining as a viable process certain exclusions must be maintained. Often, as conditions have changed, the maintenance of these exclusions has slowed or interfered with the organizing task.

The two major legislative exclusions are those employees involved in matters of management and those whose work is confidential in matters relating to labor relations. In eight of the ten Canadian provinces the acts are similar in this matter to the Federal I.R.D.I. Act which excludes from the bargaining unit "A manager or superintendent, or any other person who, in the opinion of the Board, exercises management functions or is employed in a confidential capacity in matters relating to labour relations".

Except in Quebec and Saskatchewan, persons engaged in the medical, dental, architectural, and legal professions are not deemed employees under the definitions set forth in the acts. In most jurisdictions teachers, policemen, firemen and hospital employees are covered by special legislation. Recently, the Ontario Act has been changed to include engineers as employees for the purposes of its act.

On issues of managerial and confidential status, the decisions from Board to Board follow no set pattern. A number of factors affect decisions. Some appraisal of the degree to which various functions are exercised appears to influence exclusions. Under the practice of the Canadian Labour Relations Board the job holder's functions are examined in detail. Across the managerial constraint the questions asked cover such duties as the ability to employ, suspend or discharge employees in the bargaining unit, recommend wage changes, promotions, demotions or transfers, discipline employees, grant leave or absence, make confidential reports on employees, participate in company policy-making, attend supervisory meetings as a management representative or assume the duty of superiors in their absence. This broad range of managerial functions is factored further by the manner of exercise, including frequency, the amount of working time devoted to those duties, the importance of the employees' position in the company in terms of his conditions of employment and special privileges. Also, if the functions involved included participation in special areas such as collective bargaining or grievance processing, and whether the functions are exercised with respect to personnel or only with respect to equipment, will have a bearing on Board exclusions. Finally, the Board seems to consider practice in similar firms. In the past, the rather casual approach of the unions toward these factors has created the establishment of practice that will be difficult to challenge.

in future certifications. This lack of attention may cause continued difficulties for white collar employees interested in achieving union representation.

The second major issue used as a base for exclusion is the matter of access to confidential information. Among the criteria evaluated in this decision are: access to employee records and payroll, duties in the area of time and motion study, involvement in confidential correspondence dealing with employees or production costs, the auditing of the work of other employees, participation in policy-making, the proportion of time spent on such duties and consideration of the special privileges enjoyed.

Such constraints, engrained in Board decisions by past practice, severely limit the union's flexibility in organizing white collar workers. And since this practice with respect to exclusions has been entirely acceptable to most unions for some time, altering the Board's deliberations on such issues will likely continue to absorb a great deal of union effort unless, of course, legislative action is taken.

Bargaining unit definition is another area where the decisions of various Boards have developed into well defined policy. Several provinces choose not to certify office employees with other groups of employees. And, even in those

jurisdictions where plant and office employees are certified together the number of joint certifications is extremely small. In practice, several factors affect the type of certification. Unions, for strategic reasons, often exclude office employees from their applications. Some union constitutions bar office employees from membership.⁹¹ Finally, many Boards will certify office and plant employees together only with the consent of the office employees.

Ontario is an exception. There, as a matter of policy, joint certifications are not issued, unless the number of office employees is deemed too small to form an effective bargaining unit. In the opinion of many who have commented on this issue, the Boards have substantial rationale for refusing to certify office and plant employees in the same bargaining unit. There may be little community of interest between the employees which could lead to friction or dominance by the majority, to the detriment of the minority. Recent arguments, presented by union leaders, suggest that this position may even be preferable to denying the opportunity to join to white collar workers who could benefit from union association. The legislation requiring separate units often meant separate organizing campaigns, in situations where the numbers involved did not justify the expenditure of union resources.

Current union interest in the area of legislative change is focused on legislation such as the Public Service

Staff Relations Act. Successful organizing experience under this legislation has prompted a continuous flow of suggestions that some of the provisions of this Act could, and should be duplicated in legislation currently in force in the private sector. Specifically at issue are the exclusions under managerial and confidential employee status. The unions argue that much narrower standards have been applied to exclusions in the public service without serious effect on management performance.⁹²

C. The Systems Actors

Central to the industrial relations system are the participants who populate it. Dunlop's actors seek to satisfy needs, compromising with each other and the system's contexts to accommodate the parameters of the broader socio-economic system within which they must exist. They function in various organizational structures, affected in the pursuit of need satisfaction both directly and indirectly by the contexts of the system. Some, in large organizations and distant from the management, union and government decisions which impact on their work situation; others in close proximity to management or union and thus, differently influenced; all faced with change that is having profound effect on relationships within the system. Each of the actors seeks to satisfy certain needs and, in this process, becomes dependent on others within the system. Traditionally, private sector white collar workers have satisfied their job

needs through a close relationship with management, shunning the advances of union and government. Change in technology, market-budget and power constraints are beginning to stretch industrial relationships suggesting that these too, will come under growing pressure to change and adapt. As yet, it is not clear what relationships will emerge but the systems' actors will be involved. The Dunlop model provides a base for evaluating the broad options, as well as, the factors which must be influenced if change is to take place in existing system relationships.

In the white collar setting the actors or system's participants, fall into four broad groups. These include:

- i) white collar workers
- ii) unions
- iii) managements and their organizations
- iv) governments and their agencies.

D. Establishing White Collar Rules

The establishment of procedures and rules - the procedures are themselves rules - was the center of attention in an industrial relations system. Just as the satisfaction of wants through the production and exchange of goods and services was the focus of analysis in the economic subsystem of society, so the establishment and administration of these rules is the major concern or output of the industrial relations subsystem of society. For

example, promotion for white collar employees has been addressed traditionally as a merit issue, as opposed to the approach of blue collar rules where the emphasis was on seniority. In the course of time, rules may alter as a consequence of changes in the contexts and changes in the relative status of the actors. Increases in the numbers of white collar workers and diminishing opportunity for promotion may bring seniority on to replace merit. In a dynamic society the rules are under frequent review and change.⁹³

Dunlop suggested that a wide range of procedures are possible for the establishment and administration of the rules.⁹⁴ In the case of private sector, white collar workers, past procedures have permitted management a strong hand in rule establishment. Aside from labor standards and human rights legislation, government influence has been limited although the emerging competition for employees has resulted in an indirect role for government. Unions, because of their low penetration into white collar ranks have also exerted minimal direct influence on the rule making process for white collar employees. Recent gains in public sector organizing may also have some longer term impact on white collar organizing. As yet, the expected spillover is not clearly evident.

The characteristics of the industry and company

obviously exert strong influences on a rule setting and each situation demands individual assessment. However there are some apparent influences at a general level that deserve consideration. White collar work rules were generally more liberal. Typically, white collar fringe benefits have been more generous and the control over white collar personnel was somewhat less rigid than that exercised over blue collar employees. At least that was the perception. It may be changing, but so far union organizers have not been able to exploit the changes in gaining new members. No doubt many of these characteristics stem from the traditional management assumption that white collar personnel were members of management in the management-union dichotomy, and thus, shared management's general values. Management's assumptions therefore suggested that most white collar jobs formed a part of the management continuum. Currently, the rules and rule-making processes reflect the situation where management is in a position to define the rules.

However, as the white collar group grows the capacity of management rule making is taxed, raising the possibility of some shared system which could provide a union role in the employment relationship. It is in this area that unions have played their most visible, if not their most successful role. For management, rule making is part of the process for facilitating the achievement of profit objectives; for unions it is central to their existence between management

and the worker they represent.

Clearly the organizer or manager must approach the white collar worker with a full understanding of the complex of contexts, rules and rule-makers in order to exert any influence on the white collar group. For the organizer it is not simply a matter of showing immediate benefits from union membership. Management too, underestimates the total process if, by some limited juggling of wages or fringe benefits, it believes it can effect any lasting influence over its workforce within the total system. As Dunlop points out, the web of rules emerges from all of the contexts: technological, budget-market and power. It is within this framework that each actor must assess the impact of his actions, past or potential.

E. White Collar Ideology in an Industrial Relations System.

Dunlop refers to an ideology as a "set of ideas and beliefs commonly held by the actors that helps to bind or to integrate the system together as an entity". He notes that, "Each industrial relations system contains its ideology or shared understanding", and, "the ideology demands congruence and compatibility among those views and the rest of the system."⁹⁵ Where the rules facilitate day to day functioning in the system, the ideology provides direction for the longer term. It is slow to change and difficult to manipulate and control in the job setting. Ideas and beliefs

tend to die hard even in the face of evidence that they are no longer relevant.

If we believe C. Wright Mills in his book White Collar: A Study of the American Classes,⁹⁵ any white collar ideology must have developed by omission for, in his opinion, the focal point of the white collar problem is the group's inability to develop a view point. Nonetheless, the industrial relations system apparently has some shared understandings of the white collar role. If, in fact, each actor has his own ideology, white collar actors have been unable to articulate it. Or, and this seems more likely, both management and the blue collar unions are advancing the ideologies they represent as white collar ideologies. At this point in time, the evidence to support each is available. Certainly management can point to the low penetration of the union movement into the private, white collar sector as evidence that this group rejects the union's ideology. Conversely, the union may point to the success of the movement in organizing government and public employees as evidence for the growing acceptance of their ideology. Of course, at the level of the industrial relations system, the ideology must be capable of rationally absorbing these apparent differences. Thus far, the research into white collar involvement with unions has identified a number of factors which may influence the individual white collar decisions. But none of these studies

has dealt with the broader changes in white collar perceptions, changes that could facilitate the kind of organizing that has taken place in the public sector.

If an ideology defines both the role and the place of each actor, then some investigation of the ideology affecting white collar actions deserves attention. While this study deals only with the non-professional, white collar worker in the private sector, some of its aspects appear relevant to the study of all white collar workers.

The analytical thrust of the "contexts", technological, budget-market and power, suggest several important considerations. First, apart from the increasing numbers of white collar workers in the labor force, there is no single trend that might result in a breakthrough for white collar unionism in the private sector. Changes in each of the contexts seem, at least in some cases like the clerical groups, to create strong new reasons for organizing; in other cases, such as the new technicians, the same contexts suggest a move away from the collective approach necessary to get organization functioning. It is likely that union organizers and managements will have to recognize the selective and changing impacts of such contexts, and develop their approaches accordingly. The rules that white collar people respond to, and the ideologies that emerge will reflect, as they did with the blue collar worker, the impact

of the contexts which shape the job and workplace. But the rules and ideologies will be less influenced by the physical deprivation which characterized so much of the North American job setting during the growth years of blue collar unionism. So far it seems much more difficult to generalize about the "lot" of the white collar worker: for those who have lost from changing technological contexts, many have gained; for those who have watched the budget-market context constrain their opportunities others have found new advantage in the same trends; for those who have lost in the relative distribution of power, there are many who have emerged with a strong new wedge to extract their share from the system.

Using the Dunlop framework it becomes apparent that private sector, white collar organization likely will never be a mass movement. The impact of improved wages, fringe benefits and working conditions which rallied blue collar workers to the unions in past decades was not sufficient for white collar organization. In fact, there seemed to be no one overriding issue. The strategies for organization, of necessity, will be selective and time consuming.

The ideology which may bind or integrate the white collar worker remains fragmented and vague. Its development is influenced by many factors, some shared with those blue collar workers who organized earlier in the past century.

others in common with managements who influenced both the job setting and the opportunities which faced white collar workers. These associations were reflected in the sociology that was part of the white collar scene. The humanists, labor theorists and legalists, all have commented on white collar involvement with unions, all have influenced the emergent white collar ideology.

1. The Sociology of the Work Setting

The impact of the work setting in general on employee attitudes and ideas toward unionism is not a clear or well documented subject. The white collar story abounds with comparisons between white and blue collar jobs, interests, people and relationships; but the picture presented is often inconsistent. Some argue, as did C. Wright Mills, that inevitably all worker groups will organize to establish and protect group rights in a society where groups will bargain for a share of the benefits produced by the total group. Others suggest that the impact of technology and the pressure of job situations will force workers, for human and economic reasons to seek the protection of organization.

Much of what unions have to offer grew out of their workplace experience. Since there is increasing evidence to suggest that many white collar work settings are, or will soon be similar to those faced by blue collar workers, the potential impact of such workplace change on existing

ideology warrants review. It may be a precursor for future developments in white collar organization.

Since Hawthorne,⁹⁷ several periods in the development of human relations study are evident. The Western Electric studies identified two classes of worker needs: the traditional economic need, and the social need. The Second World War, focusing as it did on output, eclipsed the early work of the humanists and it was not until the late 1940's that activity in this area began again. It remained for Argyris,⁹⁸ Maier,⁹⁹ Maslow,¹⁰⁰ and MacGregor,¹⁰¹ among others to begin defining, categorizing and relating these needs to work problems and job performance. For the most part, the explanations emerging from these studies were highly theoretical, intuitively comfortable, but inconclusive. They did, however, provide a base for research that has propelled the problems of the job, employment relationships and human problems to the forefront as an area of academic research. As a result, management has begun to look at both the economic and non-economic aspects of the job. The human approach, ill-defined and poorly administered, became something of a panacea for the problems facing management, although its impact on performance goes largely unmeasured.

Argyris,¹⁰² in a study of routine jobs, found that workers seek a social return and organizations which fail to

respond to these needs alienate employees.

In advancing his Theory X - Theory Y classifications Douglas MacGregor supported Argyris' findings.¹⁰³ He suggested that workers operating under a Theory X management tended to behave in an immature and dependent fashion, often countering with subtle disobedience, union activity and sabotage. Argyris recognized that many people adjust to a challengeless environment, but suggested that, while they did routine jobs adequately, they were seldom innovative and often highly resistant to change. Some support for both MacGregor and Argyris was later put forth by Herzberg who concluded that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were not opposite points on a continuum, but two separate dimensions. Herzberg found that extrinsic factors such as working conditions, supervision and company policies could lead to dissatisfaction on the job.¹⁰⁴ And, while this dissatisfaction could be reduced by hygienic measures (human relations training, improved policies, fringe benefits, etc.) these would not necessarily result in satisfaction, only in a lack of dissatisfaction. They concluded that real job satisfaction could come only from the intrinsic factors such as achievement, accomplishment, recognition, responsibility and challenging work. They noted that satisfaction was obtained from the content of the work itself while dissatisfaction arose from the work context. Thus, if a propensity for unionism is fostered by either a lack of job

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satisfaction or a genuine dissatisfaction, Herzberg has identified some specific factors that can be managed, or mismanaged, to influence an employee's propensity to join.

Rensis Likert,¹⁰⁵ completing extensive research on the management style question, also concluded that participation was a key factor in effective management. He spoke of an ideal in which levels of the organization were tied together, for effective two-way communication, by a key figure who linked one level to the next. His linking pin concept stressed the role of the manager as a link between two work teams, his immediate subordinates and his management peer group. His role was one of insuring effective communication up and down the organization. Study of this idea, and his subsequent emphasis on human resources accounting, suggested that while productivity increased in both the autocratic and democratic groups under observation, the democratic group showed a marked increase in morale related variables. The reverse occurred with autocracy.

Others have looked at the role of technology in the employment relationship. Vroom¹⁰⁶ concluded that people who have a high need for independence and weak authoritarian attitudes are likely to respond positively to consultation with management. McClelland¹⁰⁷ suggested that persons with a need to achieve will react well to a challenge, while

others, who are low in this dimension, seem primarily concerned with avoiding failure. George Strauss in his review of industrial relations,¹⁰⁸ concluded that worker's attitudes toward the job are influenced by a much larger number of variables than most research seems to measure. Vroom¹⁰⁹ suggested that workers who see bosses for only a few minutes each day are more likely to prefer an authoritarian management style while others, who are in close contact with the boss, prefer those who are not authoritarian. Thus the current research tends toward the idea that job satisfaction and productivity are functions of a number of interacting variables. A growing number of studies seem to indicate that no one form of motivation is universally appropriate for all personalities, cultures and technologies. It is this recognition that seems to lead to a more flexible approach to human management. Consequently, few now contend that there is an ideal management style, organization structure or set of policies for effective operation. Such conclusions pose interesting questions for both management and unions. The problems involved for both, in adapting to a wide range of possibilities for meeting employee needs, are particularly acute in the white collar area. The solutions of Likert¹¹⁰ and Blake¹¹¹ add to the continuum of possibilities set forth by earlier writers, but even the increasing options produced by this continuum are seemingly inadequate for the many problems manifest in the employer-employee relationship. Bennis¹¹² argued that

highly structured organizations are inappropriate in an age of rapid technology change. Adoptive, problem solving, temporary systems of diverse specialists, linked together by coordinating and task evaluating specialists in an organic flux was the picture Bennis portrayed. Katz and Kahn, looked at the organization as a system of interlocking roles in which the behavior of any one person is the product of the behavior of everyone else.¹¹³ Transaction and bargaining theories also provide additional insight into the employment relationship. To the extent that exchange is determined using the marginal return concepts of economics, exchange theory merely extends the economic theory of value to cover the intangibles.¹¹⁴ Transaction Theory presents the organization as a plural society containing many related but separate needs, interests and objectives which must be maintained in some sort of equilibrium. Such theory is also consistent with the growing evidence that conflict within the organization is normal, and often healthy. Whyte states:¹¹⁵

Harmony is an undesirable goal for the functioning of a complex organization. The objective should not be to build a harmonious organization but rather to build an organization capable of recognizing the problems it faces and developing ways of solving these problems. Since conflicts are an inevitable part of organizational life, it is important that conflict resolution procedures be built into the design of the organization.

Sayles¹¹⁶ suggested that managers are not employed primarily to resolve conflict, thus internally, a system

must be established whereby workflow frictions are minimized.

Since the turn of the century, changing industrial conditions and the growth of new sectors in the economy, particularly the government and service sectors, have substantially changed the industrial relations system. Throughout this period managements, governments and unions have acted to influence the direction of change, each with different objectives and varying degrees of success.

This review of the organizational behavior developments was intended only to recognize the types of work being done in the system by various participants. Its relevance to the study lies mainly in the fact that much of the work encompassed by the organization researchers has a direct bearing on the roles and potential roles of each participant in the industrial relations system. Institutional solutions, such as those of the traditional unions, may not deal with the major concerns of white collar workers. Thus a propensity for unionism fostered by the problems of corporate size and technology may not find, in the approach of unions, a solution to the problem of meeting individual needs. Conversely, were management successful in its search for effective management methods, some of the problems that give rise to union strength may disappear. This would affect the future of union development in general and, more importantly in terms of this study, the eventual impact of

union organizing among white collar workers in the private sector.

2. Labor Theory in the System Ideology

Labor theorists, in their attempts to document the rationale behind the growth and development of unions and unionism in North America, have suggested various reasons for worker-union associations. Their concerns are reviewed here for two reasons. First, they reflect the background and thinking of experienced unionists and, in a broad sense, the concerns and expectations they bring to white collar organization. Second, the theorists defined many of the conditions that surrounded earlier blue collar organizing drives, providing a base for analyzing the similarities and differences with present white collar developments. Labor theory and the unions it attempts to explain are part of the blue collar ideology. For economic reasons these unions now look enviously at the white collar population for new membership. Ultimately, any assessment of their potential success must evaluate the ability of traditional ideologies to encompass white collar needs.

Although there is nothing in the literature explicitly labelled a white collar theory of labor relations, there are a number of theories which purport to explain worker organizations. Some, while they are blue collar in their emphasis, nonetheless seem relevant to the white.

collar setting for several reasons. First, many of the assumptions behind the organization of white collar workers are blue collar in their origins. Second, the forces behind white collar organization remain the traditional blue collar unions or federations dominated by these unions. Third, the motivation to organize, at least in the private sector, comes largely from the recognition on the part of older blue collar unions that their traditional growth patterns cannot be sustained without moving into the growing white collar area. And finally, the people involved in much of the white collar organizing gained their experience in the blue collar setting. Although all these factors are undergoing change, they remain central to white collar organization. In that context, the theories which helped to explain the emergence and growth of unionism in North America deserve the attention of those who would understand the problems and achievements of white collar organizers.

As typically defined, North American labor relations is a management-blue collar concept. It provides no clear identity for the white collar worker. His experience, with some exceptions such as the retail clerks, railway clerks, musicians, newspaper writers and teachers etc., has been viewed as it related to management or the blue collar worker. Each of these groups pulled at the white collar worker as a means of claiming more power within the total socio-economic system. As a result, both the theoreticians and the

practitioners have come to view various segments of white collar work as shades of blue collar-management spectrum. Consequently, the efforts of both union and management have been directed toward inducing membership around the modified values of their respective positions in the labor relations system and, thereby, limiting the options open to white collar employees.

Most early labor theorists offer no alternatives. Their writings center on a concept of capital in competition with labor for the gains of increasing productivity and they make no allowances for white collar variations. White collar distinctions would only tend to complicate their central considerations. The fact is that the early labor theorists chose to view the white collar employee as management, even though few who occupied the ranks of the white collar worker could claim to represent, either directly or indirectly, the holders of capital in the free enterprise system. Many writers excluded the white collar worker primarily because they believed he shared the values of management and aspired to move up in the organization. And now, when the unions are expressing growing interest in this group, precedents and practices from the past often combine to hinder organizing efforts.

As most theorists saw it the labor relations setting consisted mainly of the management-blue collar dichotomy.

Research to date has done little more than attempt to measure the changing affinity of the white collar worker for those limited options. The possibility that a unique, white collar alternative exists in the labor relations system has not been considered seriously.

a. Labor Theory - A White Collar Vacuum

Labor theorists have dealt with the rationale behind particular labor organizations and the emergent forms of unionism. Few of those who offer up theories on North American labor developments have anything near a complete theory. However the contributions by many, who have chronicled the events of labor history, have provided deep insight into union developments.

Phillip Taft¹¹⁷ and John Dunlop¹¹⁸ have set out four general questions that a theory of labor must address.

These are:

- a) What were the factors that accounted for the origin of the labor organization?
- b) What pattern of growth and development characterizes the organization?
- c) What are the ultimate goals?
- d) Why did the individual join?

In Professor Dunlop's opinion, not a single significant labor theory has emerged since before World War II and, of

those which predate that conflict, only one met his four criteria.¹¹⁹ Mark Perlman in his book, Labor Theories in North America has grouped the theorists and, in this way, managed to satisfy the criteria set forth.¹²⁰ He identified five broad labor theory groups and set down each in terms of the suggested criteria. Each of the five groups; Perlman contends, meets the criteria for a labor theory specified by Dunlop. He titled his theory groupings:

- a) the Moral Conditioning Theory
- b) the Psychological Environment Theory
- c) the Social Institutions Theory
- d) the Social Revolutionary Theory
- e) the Economic Welfare Theory

b) North American Labor Theories

Each of Perlman's theory groups embody the Dunlop criteria in their attempt to address the emergence and growth of unions and unionism in North America.

The Moral Conditioning Theory attributes the origins of unionism to the spiritual poverty arising from economic misery. The policies for future growth are determined by ethical consequences such as the equitable distribution of productivity gains, and a role in determining the direction and impact of industrial change. The labor movement, this theory suggests, is destined to play a growing part in the operation of factories; a role to which the individual

worker is attracted by the realization that he can strengthen his moral position.

The Social Revolutionary Theory, centers around Marxist ideology. It suggests that unions emerge in response to the destruction of values and relationships by technological change and market growth, which cause intense job competition. Patterns of growth and development are determined by the anti-capitalist results to be obtained. The labor goal under this theory is worker control of the individual decision-making process. The social revolutionaries believe that worker involvement in unionism stems from a rebellion against exploitation.

The Economic Welfarists attribute the rise of unionism to a rational comparison of its net cost advantages and its potential, through political action, for augmenting labor's share of the national income. Growth patterns for the economic welfare group emerge from a rational analysis of the economic costs and benefits of union action. Union appeal for the individual worker, under the Economic Welfare Theory, stems from the recognition that unionism can aid in maximizing his economic position.

The Social Institutions theorists suggest that unions arose in response to the job competition resulting from growing markets. There is, the theory contends, a need for

stabilizing controls, and unions emerged in response to this need. Policies for growth stem from an expression of the common will to secure recognition and power, while the ultimate goal is a representative democracy in which enlightened private interest groups, including unions, will have a continuing role. Unionism's appeal, the social institutionalists contend, arises from the individual worker's insecurity and inability to hold his own in the daily struggle for economic security.

Finally, for the Psychological Environment theorists, unionism originates from a psychological need to bind together. Union growth patterns, according to their theory, are determined by three stimuli: cultural lag, economic insecurity and human instincts. The future and goals of the union are tied to the success of management in meeting the needs of workers and, thereby controlling the collective response to the three stimuli. Unionism's appeal for this group of theorists emerges from worker reactions to exploitation and deprivation, both mental and physical.

In arriving at a reasonable eclecticism, Mark Perlman states, "that we find the Economic Welfare and Social Institutions Theories most valuable in giving insight into American unionism."¹²¹ Perlman's dualism is prompted by the fact that American heritage emphasizes social opportunity and material advancement, goals which he contends are not

uniformly complimentary or uniformly interchangeable. At the same time, Mark Perlman suggests the Psychological Environment Theory is not acceptable since it makes several assumptions that are not supported by historical evidence in the evolution of blue collar unionism.¹²²

Perlman rejects the implication that an employer, by using a conditioning program, or by a successful educational approach, can influence the individual worker so that he becomes anti-union rather than pro-union.

When addressing the criteria set down for a meaningful labor theory there is considerable evidence to suggest that the white collar employee can be influenced to reject unionism as a factor in his employment relationship. And, if in fact, the two theories selected by Perlman do represent a base for understanding union development, and if the Psychological Environment Theory has no basis in blue collar union development, this may provide some explanation for the lack of major white collar involvement in union growth to date. For it would appear that management, through the very conditioning that Perlman rejects, has influenced the white collar worker to believe that his interests are best served by remaining outside the union.

Mark Perlman in his study of these five broad union theories rejects outright the Social Revolutionary Theory and the Moral Conditioning Theory. Based on the historical

evidence of union development he terms these inadequate explanations for American trade union growth. Perlman does not deal specifically with white collar workers. As a result, there remains the question of whether or not his arguments in support of the two theories (Economic Welfare and Social Institutions) provide sufficient evidence upon which to reject the Psychological Environment Theory as a possible base for exploring the white collar question. The Psychological Environment Theory he rejected because its explanations for blue collar unionism appeared unsatisfactory; it was, he suggested, an employer's theory of why workers join.

Before accepting Perlman's assessment of the Psychological Environment Theory some review of its content is justified. Is it a potentially useful base for viewing White Collar Unionism? How does it compare with the other theories that Perlman has advanced in light of the historical developments in the white collar sector?

Each of the three theories discussed (Economic Welfare, Social Institutions and Psychological Environment) has some elements that appear relevant to the white collar worker. But both the Economic Welfare Theory and the Social Institutions Theory have as a central theme, elements that historical events in the white collar area seem to refute. The Economic Welfare Theory suggests maximization of economic

position, an approach which is not substantiated by white collar actions to date. While economic issues must be considered important to the white collar worker, there is strong evidence to suggest that the relative reduction in non-monetary benefits compared with the blue collar worker's position was of greater concern than absolute levels in the monetary area. The underlying tenet of the social institutionalists is that, in a democratic society, enlightened self interest groups, of which unions are one, will have a continuing function facilitating the rebellion of the worker against exploitation and poor living conditions. In fact, both the Economic Welfare Theory and the Social Institutions Theory appear to center around the physiological and safety need levels; needs that many white collar workers have satisfied in their traditional employment relationship without the help of unions.¹²³

Both the social institutionalists and the psychological environment theorists suggest that new members are attracted to the labor movement in response to deprivation. The key difference between them is that the Psychological Environment Theory emphasizes mental deprivation along with physical deprivation while the social institutionalists stress mainly the physical aspects.

The ideas and beliefs that bind together and integrate the system, Dunlop's ideology, find varying degrees of

support in the various labor theories. The recognition by some, of the importance of mental deprivation, is particularly relevant to the white collar setting. The idea that worker need satisfaction can be satisfied by various combinations of the system's participants gives recognition the current situation as it impacts on the majority of white collar workers in the private sector. But, as the contexts change participant involvement may also shift creating different roles and opportunities.

3. White Collar Research in the System Ideology

The white collar literature discusses the problems of insecurity arising from organizational and technological change. It deals also with the psychological effects of job specialization, shiftwork and isolation and the sociological implications of changing management-white collar relationships, increasingly difficult communications and a growing disenchantment with the application of merit concepts based on individual effort in an interdependent group setting. In fact, the specific problems facing the white collar worker do differ from those which excited the blue collar unionist a few decades ago. There is substantial evidence to suggest that the white collar worker has been influenced by management interest in unilateral control of the functions affecting his job environment. Mark Perlman's rejection of the Psychological Environment Theory on the basis of blue collar evidence may only point to significant

group differences, not any general invalidation of the theory, particularly as it relates to white collar employees.

The fact remains that white collar organizations in the private sector have been unable to attract significant numbers of white collar workers (most gains in Canada and the United States have come in the public sector). And this failure persists in the face of growing evidence that many white collar jobs are becoming almost factory-like in their content.

Whether white collar reticence to join stems from a rejection of unionism in principle, or whether it results largely because the white collar employees feel no great need for unions, is not entirely clear. Several surveys tend to indicate that because a man is not against unions and unionism it does not automatically follow that he is for them. And, contrary to what Perlman would have us believe in the blue collar sector, management activities and efforts, if membership penetration is a measure, have had some impact on the thoughts and actions of white collar employees. Historically of course, the white collar worker has been in close contact with management and many of the attitudes he appears to have developed are parallel and overlapping. But conditions are changing and it seems likely that these changes will be reflected in the values and attitudes held by white collar workers at some point in time. As a result

of changing conditions and job requirements white collar workers are experiencing difficulties in the job setting that are new to their lot. Whether unions, as they tend to know them, are viewed as having solutions or even approaches to these problems of change remains an unanswered question.

The research, either directly related to white collar involvement with unions or indirectly tied to management-employee relations is not extensive. Areas of study dealing with white collar labor relations encompass sociology and psychology, economics and the management sciences. Labor theorists, industrial relations practitioners and those interested in personnel management have made contributions to the study of white collar jobs and problems. It should be noted however that consensus in the findings is lacking. Empirical testing is almost non-existent and agreement, where it can be found, is largely subjective.

In fact, the white collar employee is a member of such a large and diverse group that the findings from many studies provide little more than guidelines for additional research.¹²⁴ The basis for most white collar studies has centered around comparisons with the blue collar organizing experience. Current models for assessing past white collar involvement and potential future involvement with unionism have viewed the process through blue collar rationale. The likelihood that unionism will become a significant factor

in the white collar worker's life according to most literature, seems tied to the degree of similarity between white and blue collar conditions in the work environment.

The emergence of a blue collar approach to white collar workers is not unexpected. Blue collar unions in need of new members bring both skills and resources to the task of organizing white collar employees. The union's knowledge of the social and legal structures in which organizing can take place enhances its position with employees seeking new relationships with their job environment. And the fact that many blue collar workers are now employed side by side with white collar employees also has tended to influence the process of white collar organization.¹²⁵ Also, management through its actions of relating office wage and fringe benefits to those negotiated with blue collar representatives has opened yet another opportunity for drawing similarities between factory and office employees. In the area of communication, the white collar worker sees his management paying attention to the grievance procedure of blue collar employees while often doing little to facilitate the flow of communications for white collar employees. The white collar, non-professional worker, faced with these and other factors, has had to make his choice from two broad options: traditional management attachments, or blue collar unionism. One often growing less effective as the organization grows in size, the other incompatible.

with white collar traditions and needs.

There appears to be little question in anyone's mind that significant changes in both the job and the conditions surrounding the job of the white collar worker are taking place. The more important question seems to be one of whether the existing options, open to the white collar worker for enhancing or maintaining his position in the job structure, will satisfy his needs and aspirations.

The large number of white collar workers in the private sector who remain outside the union fold confound the traditional rationale for union development. A growing number of white collar jobs lack challenge, changing office structures interfere with traditional social relationships and, economically, the white collar worker often finds himself the recipient of wage and benefit packages similar to those negotiated by the union for the firm's blue collar workers. Promotions to management are harder to come by as often new jobs require a degree of specialization and skill not readily available in the firm. Yet there is no apparent rush toward unionization.

The Dunlop model, in a general sense, provides a systematic base for evaluating the data and changing conditions which affect the industrial relations system. Equally important, it sets the stage for generating and evaluating

system options.

F. White Collar Options

Is the position of the white collar employee in the industrial relations system unique? Does the white collar position require a special set of conditions in order to define the group as an entity whose actions can be analyzed and understood as something apart from the actions of blue collar workers and their unions? Is the white collar worker making sub-optimal choices because there are no meaningful alternatives for meeting his needs? Does the position of the white collar worker require some independent approach to assess his relationship and his responses to the industrial relations system?

The traditional premise that white collar workers can either "stick with management" or "join the union" appears to produce a choice that ignores both historical and current needs. Two significant trends would appear to support at least the need for considering other options. First, in the private sector there has been no important move for white collar personnel to join unions, while in the public sector, many have joined both associations and unions which have chosen to maintain only loose ties with the traditional union movement. The choice currently open to private sector white collar workers seems less than satisfactory.

Some trade unions have responded to both the law and their lack of success in organizing white collar members into existing units by establishing separate white collar entities. Prominent among those who have acted to establish separate bodies are the U.A.W. and the U.S.W. To date, such additions have not resulted in any startling organizing successes. In fact, the Teamsters Union has been among the more successful of the industrial unions organizing white collar workers and it has made few structural accommodations to get these members.

Thus the white collar employee continues to face only two major choices since even those unions who organize mainly white collar employees remain closely tied to trade and industrial groups. Many inside the labor movement contend that the choice of union is unimportant. Because of the democratic nature of unions a wide range of alternatives is available, under the union umbrella, to meet the needs of white collar workers.

That the white collar employee should be viewed in terms of his needs within the system, as well as, in the context of the constraints affecting his job and work environment, has been accepted by some unions and union leaders. That these needs can be achieved within the union movement, as we know it, has not been accepted by most white collar workers in the private sector. There have however,

been isolated breakthroughs such as the Montreal District Savings and Trust Company (1971) and, more recently, the organization of office workers at Cominco in British Columbia.

During the evolution of union-management relations, several factors have altered the broad environment in which union organization has taken place. Legislation, often fostered by union pressure and lobbies, has improved wages, fringe benefits and the general working conditions of the labor force. Unions, using such legislation as a base, have developed contract demands to further enhance the lot of their members. Management too, through its personnel departments, labor and industrial relations groups and its attention to organization structures and management styles, attempted to respond to changing employee needs. Sometimes the threat of unionization has conditioned the management response. At other times, employee policies had as their motivation increased productivity, loyalty to company and management or a reduction in employee turnover and absenteeism. All these efforts by management, however motivated constantly raise the question of whether, in these "enlightened" times, the role of unions as we know them, was not somewhat outmoded at least as it applied to white collar employees? The question of the union role and its current impact was particularly acute in the private sector where union effectiveness was not readily obvious and

management effectiveness, at least to date, more evident. Can management play both a union role and a management role for its white collar employees, at least to the extent where white collar employees see no need for union involvement in their employment relationship? What is the mix of money, fringe benefits, working conditions, job challenge, communications and involvement necessary to create a harmonious and productive situation without third party involvement?

Currently, white collar workers in the private sector have only two meaningful organizational alternatives: to belong to a trade or industrially oriented union, or no union. Unlike other jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom, our labor-legal system prevents extensive organization of non-professional white collar workers across company lines. Without this option many white collar workers find themselves in situations where the work unit they belong in is too small to organize.

Thus there would appear to be only two alternatives, one at each end of the spectrum. To management accrues at least the temporary advantage in that most white collar workers are unorganized. And, while some issues may provide the necessary impetus for organization, it is doubtful that the available issues will cause many white collar employees to move across the full spectrum to industrial

unionism as an alternative. Such a dramatic change requires significant cause, such as the state of factory employment at the turn of the century; with few exceptions the majority of white collar workers lack impetus to move them to the fold of union membership.

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CHAPTER III

THE RESEARCH METHOD

Why do workers join unions? The Dunlop model suggests a range of possible explanations. Changing technological, market-budget and power contexts act to produce new pressures and opportunities. In an effort to achieve their objectives the actors alter roles and activities, affecting balance within the system, and relationships among its participants. In these shifts change emerges, giving rise to insecurity, rule changes and the development of new relationships. Such changes can result in tighter ties between employee and management, new dependence on government or a growing awareness of the union alternative. Ideologies take longer to change, however they can and do accommodate a wide range of activities, perhaps even white collar union membership, without necessarily having to make a major shift.

In a statistical sense it is evident that dramatic change is taking place in the contexts of the existing system. Such change is evidenced by new office and information technology, growing numbers of white collar workers in the business setting, increasing costs and new competition for white collar skills and changes in power sharing with

greater government involvement, growing union interest and new management concerns. In turn, these changes have impacted on the rules, roles and relationships which affect the system's actors. As each evolves, the position of white collar workers changes; in some cases the change amounts to an erosion, affecting security, incomes and future prospects; in other cases the change brings new opportunities; in both, the uncertainty could foster new interest in unionism.

To get white collar workers into unions ideas and beliefs must change. The ideology must accommodate the action. Unless there is major upheaval, a change in legislation or badly disintegrated job and growth opportunities, a major shift in prevailing white collar ideology is not likely to occur. Without an ideological shift, any significant change in the white collar worker's propensity for unionism is likely to develop very slowly.

To measure the impact of system change on the individual white collar worker a concept of union propensity was developed. Simply stated, if an individual had a high propensity for unionism and a subsequent opportunity to join a union, there was a high probability that he would join. If, on the other hand, the white collar worker had a low propensity for unionism and an opportunity to join there was a high probability that he would reject union

membership. Union propensity was the intervening variable. This was subsequently related to a series of independent variables which could be identified and measured. To be of value the study had to deal with individual white collar workers; the independent variables which related to union propensity and the decision to join or reject unionism (see Figure 3-1). Once the respondent group was separated into high and low propensity subgroups these were checked against union and non-union status. If, in fact, high propensity for unionism and union membership were tightly related the study could then analyze the independent variables associated with high propensity. Conversely, if low propensity and non-union respondents were related, the independent variables associated with the low propensity group could be identified and analyzed. Once identified these independent variables were viewed in the context of the system, its constraints and participants, and the activities each might pursue to affect propensity and the subsequent decision to join or reject union membership. The research method was designed to achieve those goals.

A. The Research Question

Two broad research questions set the scope of the study. The purpose of this chapter was one of defining the problem and outlining the methods used to gather and analyze data in order that the research questions, and the sub-questions arising from them, could be addressed effectively.

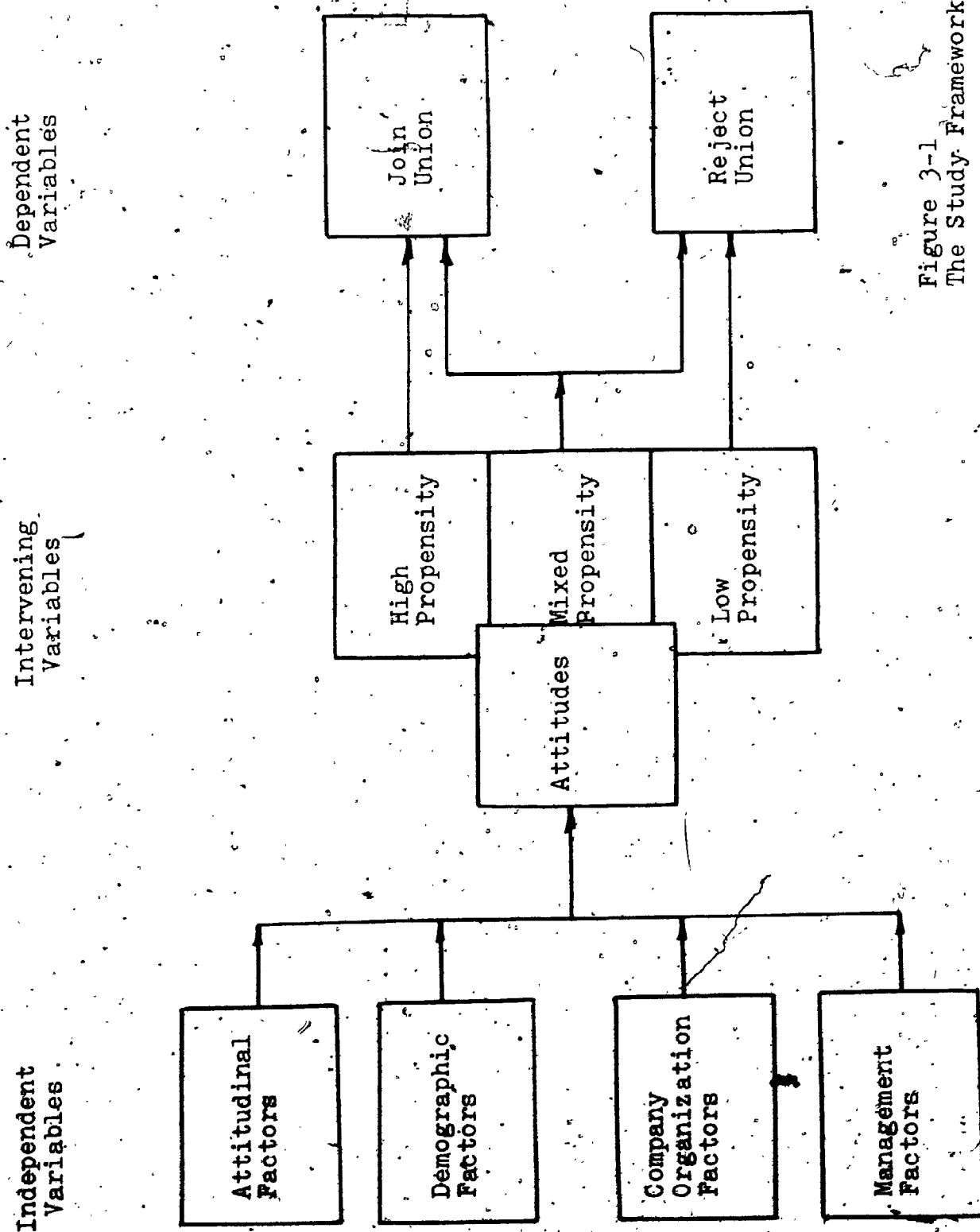


Figure 3-1
The Study Framework

The research questions were:

1. Do the respondents who have a high propensity for union involvement hold attitudes toward job, company and management that differ significantly from respondents exhibiting low union propensities?
2. What personal, job and environmental factors tend to be associated with the high and low propensity respondent groupings? Are the respective propensities associated with factors that either unions, management or governments can influence?

Following this, the objective of the research was defined as:

To identify the factors associated with the respondent's perception of his job, his company and his management in such a way that these could be related to his positive or negative attitude toward unions.

Are there some factors which relate consistently to respondent desire for union involvement and, if so, can they be identified? Are there other factors which, if handled in a certain manner by management, promote negative attitudes toward union involvement or, conversely positive attitudes toward union involvement? The approach used to identify these factors and gather data related to their role in white collar attitude formation is set out in detail in this chapter.

Research into the area of white collar employment and

its related facets began with a review of the work to date. Other studies, historical developments and the social and legal setting in which union organizing took place were all factors which affected the decision to join and, as such, provided useful inputs to a study of white collar developments.

The research methods used to provide data and a basis for analysis involved a search of existing literature, as well as, a review of other white collar research. Added to this was the survey material from a sample of white collar respondents which completed the data required for this study.

B. The Research Framework

The involvement of white collar workers with union membership is not a simple matter. Many variables interact to influence the decisions of both groups and individuals. The model, based on the work of John Dunlop, permitted the logical exploration of some of the key variables associated with the decisions of white collar people to join or reject unions in their employment relationship. More important, it permitted an exploration of the system's variables in full recognition of the constraints on the freedom of action placed on the system by its contexts.

In developing a model for the analysis of white collar involvement in labor relations several factors were

relevant. These, of course, have changed over time and will continue to do so. They include:

- a) Traditionally, management has been faced with a small group of white collar workers, many of whom shared management values and were individually, rather than group oriented.
- b) Growth of the white collar group, development of new systems and techniques and the centralization of facilities, particularly key office facilities, have forced management to begin dealing with the white collar worker as part of a group.
- c) Management's attempts to maintain and use traditional yardsticks based on individually oriented performance and rewards while managing groups, has resulted in frustration to individual workers and some solidification of white collar groups. It is these management moves, prompted by the technological and budget contexts that are beginning to provide the commonality necessary for a white collar identity.
- d) Many white collar workers have been unable to achieve effective group to group relationships (i.e. white collar to management) and some are beginning to seek alternative associations within the system.
- e) One alternative confronting white collar groups with increasing regularity is the formal

organization into labor unions.

- f) Management's ability to devise effective methods for dealing with labor groups within the company structure may determine the eventual attractiveness of the union alternative. Growing constraints from the various industrial relations systems contexts may affect the flexibility open to management for maintaining traditional relationships with white collar employees.

It is within this myriad of conditions, constraints and changes that the actions and probable actions of the white collar employee must be assessed. There is, of course, strong and growing evidence that management and unions, each for different reasons, eye the white collar group as an important vehicle for achieving their stated goals. Increasing membership, essential to the union movement, must come from this growing segment of the workforce. Under existing laws further penetration into the blue collar ranks is likely to be slow and costly. Conversely, many opportunities are evident in white collar organizing although, thus far, the union package has not attracted many new white collar members. The white collar workforce continues to grow, providing new opportunities for organizing. Also there is strong evidence to suggest that the relative advantage in wage and fringe benefits once enjoyed by white collar workers is rapidly disappearing. Thus it is evident

that the desire to organize (or to remain unorganized) is a function of many variables. In an attempt to explore some of these Dunlop's Industrial Relations System was used,

The model suggested that all parties in the industrial relations system can influence the act of joining, or rejecting a union. Further, it advances the proposition that employees, white collar or other, join a union to meet, or fulfill some need that is not adequately met through the individual's interaction with existing participants in the relevant industrial relations sub-system.

Simply stated an employee has needs in the job setting. To the extent that these needs are being satisfied in the existing setting (i.e. no union) there is little impetus for change. To the extent that such needs are not satisfied, membership in a union is one of several options open to the white collar worker seeking to satisfy some perceived need. Thus the model suggested situational options in which employee needs can be satisfied by one or more of the participants in the industrial relations system.

Basically the model asked several broad questions about white collar activities. Are there changes in the constraints, power, budget-market or technological, that suggest that the opportunities for white collar organizing are growing? Has the web of rules, which traditionally

influenced white collar thinking, began to change? And if so, what is the direction of the change and its likely impact? Have the roles of the parties in the total system begun to change and if so, what is the likely effect of these alterations? Can the needs of some participants be satisfied over the long term, if so, what will be involved?

Since the model is essentially a tool for analysis, its effectiveness must be assessed in that setting. It provides a base for the analysis work in the remaining chapters. First in the generation of hypotheses, outcomes and finally, in analysing respondent data.

1. Model Assumptions

Four major assumptions, set forth elsewhere in the thesis, are central to the model and its functioning. These are:

- a) All participants in the industrial relations system have needs which they seek to satisfy within the constraints of the system.
- b) Any one participant can satisfy another's needs thereby reducing or eliminating a similar role for other participants.
- c) To the extent that participant needs are not satisfied through existing relationships within the system such relationships will be altered in an effort to improve the level of need.

satisfaction within the system.

- d) The needs encompass both physical and mental aspects of the job setting.

Thus, within this setting, the employee has several avenues in which to seek need satisfaction on the job. Traditionally such satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) came primarily from the relationship between employer and employee. Wages, fringe benefits, hours of work, working conditions were primarily controlled by employers. Even where legislation was a factor it was usually loaded heavily in favor of the employer with little consideration wasted on the employee. The emergence of unionism in the late 1700's in the U.S. and the early 1800's in Canada brought with it the beginnings of change. Union involvement in the emerging industrial relations system brought changes in the roles of both employer and government. More recently, changes have emanated from each of the major groups vying for employee attention.

For the white collar employee the model remains similar although the attention and impact of each participant is markedly different from that evident in the blue collar setting.

2. Model Mechanics

Generally the model establishes a system of

interdependencies within a set of contexts. Obviously this system of interdependencies varies for every situation but, as Dunlop has pointed out, there are a significant number of generalizations within the labor relations setting that appear representative of system reality.

The white collar reality, at least in the private sector to date, seems most often characterized by employer dependency. Most white collar jobs in the private sector provide both fringe benefits and wages above any minimums established by government and usually this has been accomplished without union membership involvement. No doubt however, union involvement in both the blue and the so-called "grey collar" areas has had some impact on wage and fringe levels in the unorganized white collar sector. Government employee benefits have also provided impetus for action in white collar areas that, although credited to management, are indirectly related to pressures emanating from the organized sector.

Thus the model mechanics seem to suggest that individual need is a function that emerges from a comparative situation in which employees search the known environment for information on relative positions. To the extent management, union or government is a vehicle for insuring relative position there will likely be no change in the network of relationships within the system or the benefit

flows that constitute that network. Thus if employee A's needs are met in the employment setting by the employer there will not likely be any shift to a union allegiance to satisfy part of the need. On the other hand, if employee A's needs are not adequately satisfied he may well wish to add to his network of employment relationships to insure need satisfaction in the future. Such need equity could possibly be achieved by adding a union dimension to the employment relationship.

C. The Survey

White collar workers in the private sector have not joined unions. Statistically speaking, white collar workers in the private sector are neither organized nor show any significant inclination towards organization. And, while the public sector may provide both insight and leadership for effective drives in the private sector little effect from this factor is evident yet. Many authors have advanced approaches to the study of white collar workers and unionism. Klingender, writing in 1935, treated white and blue collar unions as similar and suggested that low union support among clerks stemmed mainly from a lack of class consciousness.¹²⁶ Strauss reported that white collar workers perceived unions as "dirty, noisy and lower class",¹²⁷ a perception shared by Dale in his study of clerks in the United Kingdom.¹²⁸ Blackburn,¹²⁹ however, argued that these conclusions ignored the very important facet of union character,

suggesting that unions were different and union character could develop to serve the needs of a white collar membership. What are those needs? The survey conducted as part of this research was designed to explore some aspects of white collar need and its association with propensity for unionism.

D. Research Design

The original research design was established to investigate the differences between union and non-union white collar workers. However preliminary analysis of test sample data suggested that the membership-non-membership breakdown would not provide a clear picture. There were many in the unions who would not be there if they had a choice. And perhaps, equally as many outside the union ranks who, but for the fact that they worked in companies where the majority was not interested, seemed to be prime prospects for union involvement. It was on the basis of the pretest that a scale to measure the propensity of the individual for unionism was adopted to separate respondents for purposes of subsequent analysis.

1. Setting for Research

The site selected, London Ontario, appeared typical of many Canadian industrial centers. To do a comparative study of the type proposed it was desirable that the group studied be affected by essentially the same environmental

factors. Since the sample was drawn from the same area, any uniqueness that might exist in the London study was inherent to all respondents. Selected data (see Tables 3-1, -2, -3, -4) indicate a degree of similarity between centers however, there is no intention in the comparison to suggest that results from a London study can necessarily be generalized to fit other settings or situations.

2. The Respondent Universe

In an effort to narrow the diversity in experience, job classifications and education the respondent universe was confined to male non-professional, non-government white

Table 3-1 Age Group Comparisons for Selected Cities

City	Age Groups			
	20 through 34		35 through 65	
	No.	%	No.	%
Brantford	13,855	40.1	20,695	59.9
Kitchener	28,370	46.2	33,020	53.8
London	54,715	45.9	64,410	54.1
Hamilton	69,360	40.6	101,345	59.4
Ottawa	71,730	41.8	100,015	58.2
Toronto	198,315	46.1	232,605	53.9

Source: Table 10, Population by 5 Year Age Groups for Incorporated Cities, Towns Villages and Other Municipal Subdivisions of 10,000 Population and over, 1971 Catalog 92-715 Statistics Canada. Bulletin 1.2-3 April 1973.

Table 3-2 Average Weekly Earnings Male Salaried Employees,
Manufacturing

<u>City</u>	<u>Average Weekly Earnings</u>	
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1967</u>
Brantford	\$ 173.83	\$ 152.28
Kitchener	171.67	145.18
London	170.33	151.88
Hamilton	192.85	166.50
Ottawa	179.43	154.33
Toronto	186.65	162.52

Source: Table 6 Average Hours and Earnings, Male and Female Salaried Employees in Manufacturing, Urban Areas, Last Week in October, 1967, 1969. Working Conditions in Canadian Industry, 1971, Report No. 15, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour, Ottawa.

Table 3-3 Average Hours and Earnings, Male Clerical and
Related Workers, Manufacturing

<u>City</u>	<u>Average Weekly Earnings</u>	
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1967</u>
Brantford	\$ 133.15	\$ 118.16
Kitchener	132.90	106.29
London	141.03	122.76
Hamilton	153.12	133.67
Ottawa	138.95	117.14
Toronto	143.58	122.24

Source: Table 9, Average Hours and Earnings of Male and Female Clerical and Related Workers in Manufacturing, Urban Areas, Last Week in October 1967, 1969. Working Conditions in Canadian Industry, 1971, Report No. 15, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour, Ottawa.

collar workers. The universe population also excluded those listed in The Ontario Labour Relations Act¹³⁰ who are denied protection under the labor law, as well as, those such as firemen, policemen, hospital and nursing home employees and teachers whose associations are regulated by special legislation.

Table 3-4 Population by Sex in Selected Cities

<u>City</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Brantford	31,750	49.2	32,670	50.8
Kitchener	55,250	49.4	56,560	50.6
London	108,365	48.6	114,855	51.4
Hamilton	152,420	49.3	156,755	50.7
Ottawa	145,315	48.1	157,030	51.9
Toronto	349,215	49.0	363,570	51.0

Source: Table 4, Population by Sex and Proportion of Males to Females for Incorporated Cities, Towns and Municipal Subdivisions of 10,000 Population and over, 1971. Catalog 92-714 Vol. 1, Part 1, Bulletin 1.2-2 March 1973, 1971 Census, Statistics Canada, Ottawa.

Female contracts, although extremely important due to their large numbers in the white collar setting, were omitted for the following reasons:

- a. Many of the problems facing working women are different than those which men encounter (for example, pregnancy leaves, day care and shift-work constraints).

b. Many female members of the workforce continued to view their employment as temporary and, as a result, their interest in unions embodied considerations which varied from those of the male population.¹³¹

c. Because of educational and hiring practices many major job classes tend to isolate men from women (i.e. bank tellers and secretaries) making their inclusion in one survey group questionable.

Table 3-5 indicates several very real differences between men and women, different jobs and responsibilities, different salary rates, and different qualifications, these would suggest the need for a separate study for women. No doubt the factor groups studies (Attitudinal, Demographic, Company-Organization and Management) impact on women as they do on men, however, it was felt that the differences justified a separate and distinct study. This research focussed on white collar men in the private sector. It was not considered feasible to treat women in the same way because of the many unique aspects of their employment situation.

Table 3-5 Comparison Male-Female Weekly Salaries
Manufacturing - 1969

<u>City</u>	<u>Weekly Salary</u>	<u>Weekly Salary</u>
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Brantford	\$ 173.83	\$ 83.35
Kitchener	171.67	79.41
London	170.33	91.19
Hamilton	192.85	95.70
Ottawa	179.43	100.73
Toronto	186.65	95.29

Source: Table 6, Average Hours and Earnings, Male and Female Salaried Employees in Manufacturing, Urban Areas, Last Week in October 1969. Working Conditions in Canadian Industry, 1971. Report No. 15, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Department of Labour, Ottawa.

On the basis of job titles set out in the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations¹³² 972

potential respondents were selected from the London City Directory.¹³³

3. The Respondent Sample

The sample was drawn from white collar employees in the metropolitan London, Ontario area. Preliminary estimates suggested that approximately ten percent of the white collar workers were union members (Table 1-1).

Consequently, two methods of acquiring the sample were used. First, the group of 972 names were listed from the directory on the basis of white collar job titles. From this list 200 names were selected randomly for contact. Subsequently, the 200 names produced 117 non-union contacts (and 31 respondents who belonged to various unions. In order to increase the number of union respondents the remaining 772 names on the original list were scanned for persons employed by companies known to be organized. Two hundred names were selected at random from this organized group. This list produced an additional 151 union respondents and ten non-union respondents. (Change of employer was the main reason for non-union respondents turning up in the group). Table 3-6 lists the breakdown of contacts and responses by category.

Originally, the intent was to use a sample of approximately 250 respondents consisting of 125 union and 125 non-union participants. Later, because some of the initial respondents belonged to industrial unions while others belonged to white collar unions, the number of union respondents was increased to provide a sufficient group of white collar workers in each of the two union categories.

Almost all of those on the final list (400) were contacted by telephone prior to the time the questionnaire was mailed out. In an effort to improve the response rate,

Table 3-6 • The Respondent Sample

	<u>Contacts</u>	<u>Respondents*</u>
Total	400	309
Union Members	220	182
Non-union Respondents	180	127

*Percentage of Respondents to Contacts, 77.2%

(a) those belonging to white collar unions or separate white collar locals of industrial unions.

(b) those belonging to industrial union locals.

The breakdown appears below in Table 3-7

Table 3-7 Union Respondent Breakdown

	<u>Contacts</u>	<u>Respondents</u>
Total	220	182
White Collar Union Members	122	105
Industrial Union Members	98	77

the purpose of the study was explained and each person contacted was asked if he would participate. Twenty six names on the list had to be contacted by mail without the introductory call, either because they had unlisted numbers or they were inaccessible by telephone in five successive contact attempts during the fieldwork period. Only 14 of

those contacted refused outright to participate. An additional nine made their participation conditional on the type of questions asked. A breakdown of the sample response is included in Table 3-8. The balance were not returned (73), returned too late for inclusion (4), partially completed (3) or contained information on a series of test questions that indicated a lack of care or pattern of random responses that rendered the questionnaire unusable (14).

Table 3-8 Response Rate Breakdown

	<u>Contacted</u>	<u>Questionnaire Responses</u>
By telephone	374	307
By letter	26	16
Total	400	323
Partial Information	-	3
Conflicting Information*	-	14
Total Questionnaires Used For Analysis	-	306

* Response pattern across test questions indicated random checkmarks or carelessness - these were omitted from study.

4. Questionnaire Pretest

The pretest was conducted primarily to determine the reliability of the scale questions included in the questionnaire. It also facilitated some modification to the questionnaire in the removal or rewording of difficult

and ambiguous questions and allowed some trial of the fieldwork program for contacting the respondents.

A sample of twenty white collar employees, all office union members, was used to pretest the questionnaire and provide the data used in computing internal consistency and scale reliability comparisons. Questionnaires were left overnight with the respondent and picked up the following day. Then the respondent was interviewed to determine whether he encountered specific problems with the questionnaire. As a result of these discussions, some modifications were made in the final questionnaire. (Appendix B)

Data from the pretest sample provided a basis for calculating the question-to-question correlations, as well as, the split half reliabilities for the scales involved. Based on this information, the scales used were modified to improve their reliability for the sample under study.

5. Questionnaire Design

The five part questionnaire, consisting of 126 questions, was divided as follows:¹³⁴

Part I General information covering respondent background, job and company information and questions covering respondent satisfaction with his employment situation.

Part II A series of questions used previously by)

Professors Abraham Zaleznik and David Moment¹³⁵ designed to identify need levels as defined by Professor Abraham Maslow.¹³⁶

Part III A series of questions dealing with respondent evaluation, on a four point scale, of various aspects of his job, supervision and company.

Part IV A twenty question scale designed by Uplapp and Dunnette¹³⁷ for categorizing positive and negative attitudes toward union membership.

Part V A thirteen part question series dealing with organization structure and management style as perceived by the respondent.

Five scales were included in the design of the questionnaire. These covered: union propensity, management style, organization structure, economic benefits and non-economic benefits as perceived by the respondent.

(a) Union Propensity Scale - 10 Questions

The scale, designed by Uplapp and Dunnette has reported split half reliability ranging between .70 and .96 and has been used to indicate an acceptance of, rejection of, or indifference toward some of the basic values underlying unionism. It was included in this research to provide a method of looking at those members of each white collar

group, union and non-union, who favor unionism even though they are not members, and those who reject some or all aspects of unionism even though they belong to union locals. This was necessitated by the fact that some who do not favor union membership are required to join by virtue of union security agreements, while others who might join have no opportunity since, in their companies, they are part of a minority.

Two techniques were employed to determine the reliability of the scale questions. Item total or part-whole correlation allowed the researcher to determine how the subset (in this case one item) correlated with the total of all other items. In the pretest this technique was used to decide which items in the original scale would be included in the final version of the questionnaire.

The second technique, the split half reliability test, was used to measure the comparability of items in each scale. For Table 3-9, the scale consisted of ten items of ungraded difficulty. To determine the degree of comparability among items the scale was divided into odd and even numbered items and tested using the Brown-Spearman formula. Since both measures (odd and even) were determined at the same time, any chance fluctuations due to physical conditions or to chance factors in the test situation will influence the test scores of the individual in the same direction. The

correlation between variables is a function of the reliability of their measurement (the correlation between true scores is 1.0).

Table 3-9 Item Total Correlations for Union Propensity Scale¹³⁸

Question	2	6	8	11	13	15	16	17	18	20
2	1	.66	.56	.79	.70	.78	.93	.61	.61	.49
6		1	.79	.70	.78	.93	.61	.61	.49	.56
8			1	.78	.93	.61	.61	.49	.56	.66
11				1	.61	.61	.49	.56	.66	.56
13					1	.49	.56	.66	.56	.79
15						1	.66	.56	.79	.70
16							1	.79	.70	.78
17								1	.78	.93
18									1	.61
20										1

Split Half Reliability, .68¹³⁹

Based on Questions, Part IV, Nos 2,6,8,11,13,15,16,17,18 and 20.

(b) Management Style Scale - 6 Questions

The management style scale, derived from Professor Rensis Likert's studies reported in New Patterns of Management¹⁴⁰, was used as a measure of the perceived participative-authoritative atmosphere in the company where the respondent worked. The scale was used to divide the respondents into two broad groups: (i) those employed in

companies where the management style was seen as participative and, (ii) those employed in companies where the management style was seen as authoritative. These dimensions were then compared with the respondents' propensity for unionism. The Likert questions involved four response choices which were scaled from four (authoritative) through one (participative). This provided a cumulative response range on the question group which varied from six to twenty four which was classified as follows:

- (i) Participative 6-12
- (ii) Mixed 13-17
- (iii) Authoritative 18-24

On the basis of the pretest sample this scale had a split half reliability of .79 and an item total correlation as set forth in Table 3-10.

Table 3-10 Item Total Correlations for Management Style Scale

<u>Question</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
2	1	.73	.90	.74	.89	.61
3		1	.74	.89	.61	.83
4			1	.61	.83	.73
6				1	.73	.90
8					1	.74
9						1

Split Half Reliability .79

Based on Questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9.

(c) Organization Structure Scale - 4 Questions

Gaining effective access to management is a key promise of most union organizers. In situations where the employee feels the need for access to management, unions have created an elaborate communication system that constitutes one of their main selling points in many organizing campaigns. For the individual, such a system may only be necessary if he feels he cannot effectively communicate on his own. A critical factor is the organization structure.¹⁴¹ The scale used to describe the organization structure as either "open" or "closed" was composed of four questions with a split half reliability of .66. The item total correlations for the scale are set out in Table 3-11.

Table 3-11 Item Total Correlations for Organization Structure Scale

<u>Question</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>
3	1	51	28	93
11		1	93	59
12			1	61
13				1

Split Half Reliability .66

Based on Questions 3, 11, 12 and 13.

(d) Economic Scale - 6 Questions

The economic scale was made up of questions covering three general areas associated with job economics: direct

income, fringe benefits and job security.* The scale, developed for this study, had a split half reliability of .78 for the pretest group. The item total correlations for the Economic Scale are set forth in Table 3-12.

Table 3-12 Item Correlations for the Economic Scale

Question	12	15	22	23	27	40
12	1	.47	.74	.74	.84	.68
15		1	.74	.84	.68	.47
22			1	.68	.47	.74
23				1	.74	.74
27					1	.84
40						1

Split Half Reliability .78

Based on Questions, Part II No.s 12,15,22,23,27, and 40.

(e) Non-Economic Scale - 5 Questions

A number of factors consistently turn up in the literature as reasons for both the acceptance and the rejection of unionism on the part of the white collar worker. Among these were: opportunities for promotion, job challenge and responsibility, identification with management, communication with management, and class and status perceptions.

* Job Security was defined as the period over which the respondent believes his income and fringe benefits might continue.

Table 3-13 Item Total Correlations for the Non-Economic Scale

<u>Questions</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>39</u>
13	1	48	74	55	71
20		1	55	71	56
25			1	56	48
30				1	74
39					1

Split Half Reliability .72

Based on Questions, Part II, No.s 13, 20, 25, 30, and 39.

The Non-Economic scale, consisting of five questions, was designed to view a combination of these factors as they are associated with union propensity.

(f) General Data

In addition to the five broad categories encompassed by the scale analysis, a number of additional dimensions were investigated for both the high and low propensity groups. These included items divided into the following factor groups:

- a) Attitudinal factors
- b) Demographic factors
- c) Company-Organization factors
- d) Management factors.

6. Questionnaire Analysis

In attempting to discover "why workers join", the

questionnaire was structured to permit analysis across propensity groups. The underlying assumption suggested that people with a high propensity for unionism would be more likely to join than those with a low propensity. Thus the basic analysis was structured to separate propensity groups and then to develop the data around those propensity groups to determine if there were any associations that could be influenced by participant groups such as employers or unions. For example, if respondents who were categorized as low propensity held exactly the same views on income levels and fringe benefits as high propensity respondents, this factor may not be one which could be used effectively to alter or forestall a change in propensity. Thus the basic analysis in the study was performed across the propensity dimension.

Originally intended as a descriptive study of the literature and research on why private sector white collar workers join unions, the focus shifted when it became evident that there was little quantitative data available for comparison. Thus the research sought to explore a broad spectrum of factors thought to be related to the joining or rejection of union membership to the exclusion of an in-depth study of any one category. Although it represents a limited base for analyzing the data the chi-square test was considered appropriate for this research and the essential comparisons with earlier works.

Rarely does it happen that an effect is brought about by a single cause, more often a combination of circumstances is necessary and the absence of any one of them may be enough to prevent the occurrence of the event. Association and dependence present constraints that must be balanced to analyze the data. The use of the chi-square to test association, contingency and goodness to fit does have clear limitations. The factors measured are not necessarily independent of one another, thus one factor could affect some of the results indicated in the measurement of other factors.

It can happen that proportions are not identical even where real associations exist and thus it is essential that some test of significance be administered to insure that the observed differences are greater than could be attributed to chance. The chi-square test deals with the reality of the association examining whether the observed frequencies in the distribution differ significantly from the frequencies which might be expected from an assumed hypothesis.

Footnotes - Chapter III

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CHAPTER IV

WHITE COLLAR PROPENSITIES: A PROFILE OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

The white collar story abounds with comparisons between white and blue collar jobs, interests, people, associations and relationships, but the picture presented is often inconsistent and changing. The white collar profile is neither like nor unlike the blue collar employee's profile. There are too many variables to get a single image from the diversity of profiles for either white or blue collar employees. The need to look closely at the associations that are uniquely white collar was set forth in the objectives of the study.

The hypotheses, selected from a wide range of possibilities, dealt with the issues most often cited as factors associated with the attitudes of white collar workers toward unionism. The background material found its support in the literature, speeches, management and union papers and articles, conference proceedings, statistical reports and research studies. The hypotheses and background material reflected prevalent concerns evidenced in current writings on the white collar worker. The predictions, based on the analysis

of many works by those who have studied the white collar worker, represented a consensus opinion on the issues stated. The outcomes, explored in detail in this chapter, were based on data gathered from over three hundred respondents of the white collar non-professional, non-government segment of the labor force. 142

A. The Hypotheses

The hypotheses which follow can be divided into four categories:

- a) An Attitudinal Set
- b) A Demographic Set
- c) A Company-Organization Set
- d) A Management Set

The attitudinal set included one hypothesis which simply looked at the relationship between union membership and union propensity. The demographic set included hypotheses on age, formal education, post secondary training and the influence of the father's occupation. Included in the company-organization set were hypotheses on economic and non-economic benefits, organization structure, company size, office size, company rules, company growth and job challenge. Finally, the study included a set of hypotheses which explored management practices. These included hypotheses on management style, job performance rating, cooperative management posture, management communication, two-way

communications and management support and encouragement.

B. The Attitudinal Set

Union Membership and Union Propensity

Many of the studies which have viewed union interests (or lack of them) among workers have measured these differences across membership-nonmembership lines. Because of the democratic process involved in certifying a union, it is possible that many who belong do so only because the majority in their place of employment preferred union membership.¹⁴³ Conversely, many of those among the unorganized workforce might vote for union representation given an election opportunity.¹⁴⁴ Because of this possibility the concept of union propensity was defined and has been used to examine the research responses.

High propensity indicated strong support for the ideas, practices and objectives ascribed to by trade unions. Low propensity indicated a lack of respondent support for union involvement. Thus a majority of union members, but not all, might be expected to exhibit a high propensity for unionism. And, while not all non-union, white collar workers will display a low propensity for unionism a majority of this group might be expected to fall in the low propensity category.

• Union propensity was defined primarily to get at the

groups who favor unionism including those who cannot or do not belong, as well as, those who reject unionism, but because of the certification process find themselves part of a certified union or association.

The following hypothesis was set out to define the propensity makeup of the respondent group.

Hypothesis 1

Non-union respondents have a lower propensity for unionism than union member respondents.

i. Background

Union propensity accurately reflects a sharing of union values, and while, in some cases, non-union respondents will have a high propensity for unionism, most situations involving the non-union respondent will result in a low union propensity measure. But more important is the implicit recognition that a union-non-union categorization tends to mix people with significantly different opinions on union values. It was assumed that not all union members would belong if they had an individual choice. As well, it follows that not all of those outside the ranks of organized labor would be there if they too had the freedom to make a personal decision on the matter.

The hypothesis was stated mainly to test the validity of separating, and subsequently analyzing the data across high and low propensities for unionism, as opposed to a separation on the basis of union membership.

ii. Prediction

The hypothesis would be supported. Given that union certification requires a majority in favor, the outcome from a sampling of any union group should produce a higher proportion of high propensity respondents than low. Likewise, a sampling of non-union people was expected to produce a higher proportion of low propensity people.

The analysis was expected to produce four distinct groups:

- Union respondents, high propensity
- Union respondents, low propensity
- Non-union respondents, high propensity
- Non-union respondents, low propensity

Subsequent analysis was to be done across these four groups if each emerged with numbers adequate to produce an assessment based on significant calculations.

Table 4-1

Relationship Between Propensity and Union Membership

	Union Respondent	Non Union Respondent	
Low Propensity	25 (30)	75 (88)	118
High Propensity	68 (72)	32 (34)	106
	102	122	224

$$\chi^2 = 41.62 (p < .001)$$

Table 4-1 indicates that a significant relationship existed between non-union white collar workers and low propensity for unionism. It also shows that a significant group of the non-union respondents, 32 percent, have a high propensity for unionism. Conversely, the majority of union respondents had a high propensity for unionism, although here too, a significant group of union respondents (25 percent) had a low propensity for union membership. Thus, it would appear that within the groups traditionally defined by membership as union and non-union, there are significant sub-groups.

The four hypotheses which follow are stated in the form of expected outcome. Tables showing the percentage outcomes are accompanied by chi-square (χ^2) computations. A summary of these data and a note on reliability are included in Appendix A.

The literature on white collar workers suggests that a number of variables tend to influence employee attitudes toward union membership. For this study these variables have been categorized into four groups and related to the respondent's propensity for unionism.

C. The Demographic Set

The variables considered in this category of hypotheses include:

- a) Age
- b) Level of education
- c) Post secondary training
- d) Father's occupation.

Each of these variables is considered in terms of its association with union propensity.

a) Age

The commitment of many to the union movement has often been related to the individual's knowledge of, and experience with union activities, particularly during the period when unions were struggling for growth and recognition. Thus, those under age 35 would be least likely to have been exposed to either extensive knowledge of union development or direct involvement in the union's formative stages and, therefore, would have a low propensity for unionism if the predicted association exists.

Hypothesis 2

A respondent's propensity for unionism will be low if he is in the group under age 35.

i. Background

The literature suggests in several instances that part of the union mystique is an intimate sharing of the problems and achievements associated with early union development.¹⁴⁵ The struggles for union recognition and the battle for union growth and legitimacy contributed to the shared commitment. Since much of this history was altered by the legislation of the 1930's and the labor arrangements that accompanied the Second World War, those under the age of 35 are often unaware of these factors or, at best, know of them only in a vicarious fashion. For many early unionists, memberships assumed an almost religious significance; exploitation, oppression, and industrial slavery provided a focal point for rallying commitment to the union's objectives. Changes in the law, tight labor markets, more enlightened management and the success of the unions in combating these ills have combined to reduce the traditional problems in the workplace. Newer entrants to the workforce have no way of sharing this history in any real terms and thus, union membership as protection against such ills often rings hollow.

ii. Predictions

Since the group under the age 35 has spent most of its working life in a situation of rising economic growth and improving work conditions, it was predicted that they would most often come from the low propensity respondent group. Without the experience reminiscent of the early 1930's and the early 1940's, they would feel less affinity for the role of the union in various areas of the employment relationship. This would result in a significantly greater number of the group under age 35 expressing the values associated with a low propensity for unionism.

Table 4-2

Relationship Between Age and Union Propensity

	Under 35	Over 35	
Low Propensity	60 (71)	40 (47)	118
High Propensity	46 (48)	54 (58)	106
	119	105	224

$$\chi^2 = 3.93. (p < .05)$$

The data support the hypothesis indicating that respondents in the age group under 35 years have a lower propensity for unionism than those in the higher age group.

b) Level of Education

Level of education has often been related to job success and, as a result it was thought, at least in some quarters, that those with higher levels of education would view the possible benefits of unionism with some skepticism.

Hypothesis 3

A respondent's propensity for unionism will be low if his level of formal education exceeds grade 10 or its equivalent.

i. Background

Several references in the white collar literature suggest education as a major stumbling block to effective organization among white collar workers. Education and promotion to management have been equated in the literature in such a way as to indicate that those with education felt less need for group action on their behalf. It could be, the arguments run, that education promotes individuality, suggesting that those with higher levels of education would prefer to depend on their own initiative in the job setting. Other studies have documented the difference in level of education between blue and white collar employees. These studies appear to ignore the fact that many technicians and professionals, with high educational levels, have resorted to joint action through various

associations in their job dealings.¹⁴⁶

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that there would be little difference between the education levels of high propensity and low propensity respondents. A respondent's propensity would not be related to his level of education. The prediction was based on the evidence that many white collar workers such as teachers, government workers and professionals have joined unions and associations to bargain collectively with their respective managements.

Table 4-3

Relationship Between Formal Education and Union Propensity

	Up to Grade 10	Over Grade 10	
Low Propensity	23 (27)	77 (91)	118
High Propensity	34 (36)	66 (70)	106
	63	161	224

$$\chi^2 = 2.96 (p < .10)^*$$

*Those hypotheses with a p of greater than .10(2.706) were rejected.

The group with the higher education may lean toward individual effort and expect to be rewarded on an individual basis, an expectation that is not typically fostered by

unionism. The data in Table 4-3 indicate support for the hypothesis. It would appear that union propensity among white collar workers is associated with level of education, at least to the extent that those with higher educational backgrounds do not totally share the interest in unionism evidenced by those with lower levels of formal education.

c) Post-Secondary Education

As with the previous hypothesis it was assumed that the pursuit of post-secondary training and education was indicative of an individual desire for improvement. And, where that training involved a job orientation, it was further assumed that the individual had a desire for advancement within the firm. Further education was one of the vehicles chosen to achieve this goal. The hypothesis was structured in the belief that individuals who chose this route would be less likely to see the union as a meaningful part of their career plans, tending instead toward individual performance as a base for progression in that firm.

Hypothesis 4

A respondent's propensity for unionism will be low where he has been actively engaged in post-secondary training since leaving school.

i. Background

For reasons similar to those set forth in Hypothesis 4,

the research suggests that those who seek post-secondary education or training do so primarily to enhance job prospects. The white collar employee's interest in "getting ahead" as opposed to the blue collar employee's interest in "getting by" seems to motivate much of this personal self development.

Choosing advancement over security, and selecting performance on the job over seniority on the job as his criteria for promotion, the white collar worker sees personal development as a valuable undertaking.

Together with this interest in advancement, he couples a reliance on personal initiative, as opposed to any dependence on collective action.¹⁴⁷ "Unions are, therefore, seen not simply as an irrelevance, but as a positive hindrance to those individualistic strivings and expectations."¹⁴⁸

Conversely, citing Frumhartz again, "The picture is undoubtedly overdrawn and...it is bound to come into increasing conflict with the changes which are overtaking the white collar worker's job and his working environment."¹⁴⁹ Whyte notes that there is a trend toward playing down the traditional concern for occupational involvement and contribution and developing a greater emphasis on private preoccupations.¹⁵⁰

iii. Predictions

There would be a difference between high and low propensity groups on the dimension of post-secondary education. The continuing emphasis on personal achievement would affect most white collar workers and those who did not share union values, the low propensity group, would look to such things as post-secondary training as a useful vehicle for personal development and improvement in the job setting.

Table 4-4

Relationship Between Post Secondary Training and Union Propensity

	No Post-Secondary Training	Post-Secondary Training	
Low Propensity	26 (31)	74 (87)	118
High Propensity	25 (26)	75 (80)	106
	57	167	224

$$\chi^2 = 1.04 \text{ (Rejected)}$$

The data from Table 4-4 indicate no significant difference between the propensity groups and their involvement in post-secondary training.

d) Father's Occupation

Several studies of blue collar workers have indicated a strong relationship between the opinions of family members about unionism and the presence or absence of union members in the family unit.¹⁵¹ The indication from this work has been consistent in its suggestion that where there were members of the family unit who were also union members other individuals in the family were positively inclined toward unions and union activities. On the basis of these studies it was indicated that respondents whose fathers held jobs classified as union supportive¹⁵² would have a high propensity for unionism.

Hypothesis 5

A respondent's propensity for unionism will be high if his father's occupation is union supportive.

i. Background

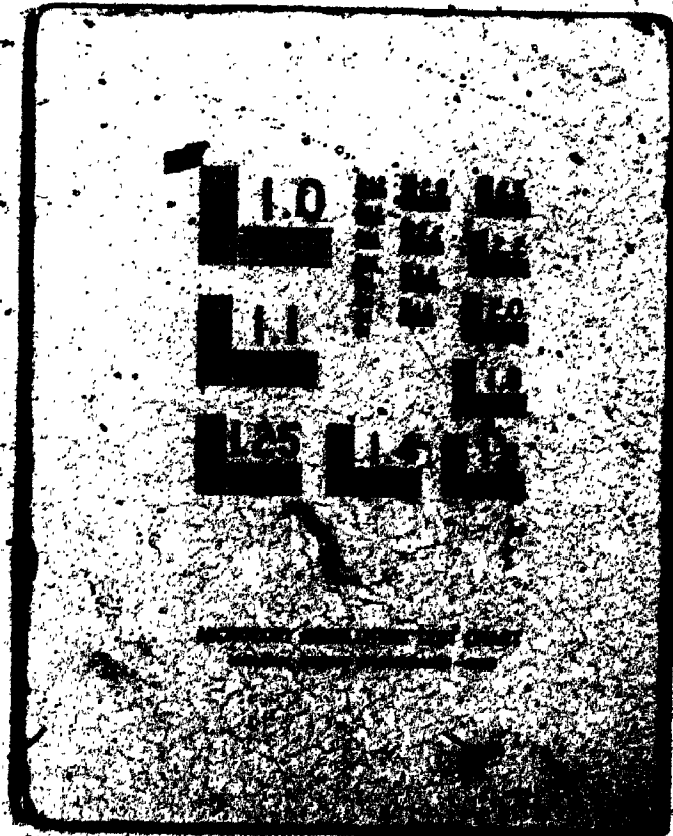
If union propensity is related to understanding the past and present role of unions in the employment relationship, it could be fostered by a parent holding a union supportive job. It was assumed that if the head of the household held a union supportive job, it was possible that the respondent might develop a positive sharing of union values (high propensity).

Seymour M. Lipset's study of office workers has shown that 44% of those with union member relatives or

3

4

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friends had such values. Compare this to the fact that only 21% of those without such acquaintances had similar values. Other studies and information also indicate that among white collar employees, working class origins increase the likelihood that the respondent will join a union.¹⁵³ On the other hand, the same research indicated that people who seek upward mobility often acquire the values and attitudes of those to whose level they aspire.

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that if the respondent came from a home where the father held a union supportive job there was a high probability that the respondent would express sentiments sympathetic to the high propensity position. Thus high propensity is associated with situations in which the head of the family holds or held a union supportive job.

Table 4-5

Relationship Between Father's Occupation and Union Propensity

	Union- Support	Union Reject	
Low Propensity	37 (44)	63 (74)	118
High Propensity	50 (53)	50 (53)	106
	97	127	224

$$\chi^2 = 3.43 (p < .10)$$

Table 4-5 indicates that a high propensity for unionism is associated with fathers who hold union supportive jobs and the association is significant.

D. The Company-Organization Set

The hypotheses included in this set encompass the following variables:

- a) Economic benefits
- b) Non-economic benefits
- c) Organization structure
- d) Company size
- e) Office size
- f) Company rules
- g) Company growth
- h) Job characteristics

a) Economic Benefits

Economic deprivation has always been high among the suggested causes of unionism and it might be expected that white collar workers seeking union representation were motivated by the need to improve their economic lot. This assumption seems likely to be reinforced even further in view of the gains which have accrued to the blue collar worker through his union activities. Further, the recognition, of late, that many managements seem to have resorted to the blue collar settlement as a base for improvements in white collar economic benefits, enforces the perceived

role of unions in the economic arena. Among the benefits included in this scale are wages, fringe benefits and job security (defined as the continuation of wages and fringe benefits over time).

Hypothesis 6

The respondent who perceives the economic benefits from his job as high or above average will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Conflicting data pervade the issue of job economics and its relationship to union membership. Unions, while they present a variety of objectives ranging from economic returns to political and social action programs, are best known for their performance in the areas of job economics and job security. However, recently, union promotional material, to white collar group in particular, has begun to de-emphasize the economic motives for organization.¹⁵⁴ Researchers such as Fredrick Herzberg have also shed some light on the economic elements of the job environment, suggesting that rather more emphasis has been placed on this aspect than is warranted.¹⁵⁵ David Lockwood, commenting on the evidence from the British setting observes:

There is little demonstrable connection between unionization and economic position in the narrow sense of level of income, and degree of job security. Those clerks with the greatest security of tenure are not those with the greatest degree of organization. On the contrary, it is among the more highly paid and secure clerical population that the degree of unionization is highest. 156

Thus it was assumed that the difference between propensity groups across the economic dimension would not be significant. The assumption seemed further supported when a comparison of union publicity to both white and blue collar workers indicated that wage, fringe benefit and job security issues were similar for both groups. These, the evidence suggested, were not issues that would separate either membership or propensity groups.

ii. Prediction

Economic security, encompassing wages, fringe benefits and job security, would not be a dimension across which propensity groups would differ significantly. Since wage rates and economic benefits are easily communicated they would be similar from firm to firm for like jobs and thus, they would not be associated uniquely with either a high or low propensity respondent. Job security, although predicted to become a more important issue, was not likely to seriously concern white collar workers as long as the growth

in their occupational groups was maintained.

The hypothesized relationship between high economic benefits and low propensity is not supported.

Table 4-6

Relationship Between Economic Benefits and Union Propensity

	Below Average Economic Benefits	Above Average Economic Benefits	
Low Propensity	69 (81)	31 (37)	118
High Propensity	67 (71)	33 (35)	106
	152	72	224

$$\chi^2 = .170 \text{ (Rejected)}$$

Table 4-6 indicates that the differences in propensity as they relate to job economic benefits are insignificant. The evidence suggests that perceived economic benefits (perhaps because they are often similar between firms in a given area) are not an important factor in the respondent's level of propensity for unionism.

b) Non-Economic Benefits

Non-economic benefits (among them promotions, job challenge, job interest and working conditions) have been those aspects of the job most often set forth in stating the

advantages of white collar employment. Management's emphasis on these factors suggests some feeling that such benefits might induce a low propensity for unionism among its white collar employees. Hypothesis seven was designed to test this assumption.

Hypothesis 7

The respondent who perceives the non-economic benefits of his job as high or above average will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Among the factors included in this scale were opportunity for advancement, job challenge and responsibility, identification with management, job status and class perceptions. Because these factors are more difficult to measure, often associated with management prerogative and receive less attention from unions, it was assumed that differences would occur across propensity groups. Other researchers have presented evidence to suggest that the non-economic aspects of the job may be much more important to the formation of job attitudes than are the economic issues.

Burns, in his article on the white collar worker, suggests that the non-manual worker's environment

includes such advantages as more pleasant surroundings, more personalized contact with management, an easier work pace with fewer time pressures, less rigorous supervision and more freedom of movement, close association with small groups of co-workers and physical separation and estrangement from manual workers.¹⁵⁷

Ostensibly, such differences resulted in an increase in individual aspirations, increased job satisfaction, dilution of group consciousness and a nourishment of white collar identification with management. It was assumed that these were important to white collar workers and, since union efforts in these directions were almost unknown, there would be a difference across the non-economic dimension between high and low propensity groups.

ii. Predictions

The low propensity group would perceive itself with above average non-economic benefits more often than those holding similar views in the high propensity group.

The association suggested by hypothesis 7 is supported by the data in Table 4-7. It indicates that a low propensity for unionism is associated with

above average benefits while a high union propensity is most often associated with those respondents who perceive their non-economic benefits as below average.

Table 4-7

Relationship Between Non-Economic Benefits and Union Propensity.

	Below Average Non-Economic Benefits	Above Average Non-Economic Benefits	
Low Propensity	32 (38)	68 (80)	118
High Propensity	57 (60)	43 (46)	106
	98	126	224

$$\chi^2 = 11.29 \text{ (p} < .001 \text{)}$$

c) Organization Structure

The relationship between organization structure and white collar propensity for unionism has not been measured in prior studies. Many factors bearing directly on the working relationship between employer and employee appear affected by the organization structure. Most research studies have concentrated on the individuals who populate the structure, not the structure itself. Problems of communication and association along with perceived involvement are often influenced by the structure of the company organization.

Thus, while the relationship between union propensity and organization structure has not been measured in prior studies, the unions have stressed their involvement in two-way communication, promotion within the organization and equity with respect to monetary and other benefits. On this basis the following hypothesis was tested:

Hypothesis 8

The respondent who perceives his organization structure as one that permits direct and close involvement between employee and management will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Many authors, among them Everett Kassalow, have suggested changes in the organizations and structures of companies and institutions have altered drastically the once close relationships between management and the white collar employee.¹⁵⁸ As part of this change, they have argued that the white collar worker no longer has direct access to management and, in this situation, his frustration could lead to a group or power type representation similar to that provided for blue collar workers by the union. It is, Kassalow says, a function of group size. The growing number of white collar workers in the company setting makes individual contact difficult and, since

traditional office structures are breaking down, new forms of contact and influence may have developed in the office.

ii. Predictions

Although there is little research to support the practical opinion that changing organization structures would lead eventually to a dilution of the perceived relationship between management and the white collar worker, experience leads to a predicted difference between propensity groups. Thus, low propensity groups would more often perceive a close involvement with management than high propensity groups. And, conversely, high propensity respondents would suggest more often that the organization structure in their companies permitted only distant involvement with management.

Table 4-8

Relationship Between Organization Structure and Union Propensity

	Close Involvement	Distant Involvement	
Low Propensity	53 (62)	47 (56)	118
High Propensity	25 (26)	75 (80)	106
	89	135	224

$$\chi^2 = 14.71 \text{ (p} < .001\text{)}$$

The data from Table 4-8 lend support to the hypothesis that respondents, who see their organization structure as open and their access to management personnel unimpeded, will have a low propensity for unionism.

d) Company Size

The ability to develop the social dimension in one's worklife, and thereby satisfy what Maslow called the social need level,¹⁵⁹ has often disappeared in the impersonal setting of the large company, according to some researchers. It has long been recognized that, relative to the group size experienced by many blue collar workers, the white collar employee has had few associates in the company groups. This changed rather dramatically in the years since World War II and only recently, has its effect begun to attract union organizers. In fact, many employers have only white collar workers; in these settings the staff orientation has disappeared and saleable output is that of the white collar group. Thus both the questions of company size and office size are raised in the case of white collar interest in unionism.

Hypothesis 9

The respondent who is employed in a small company will most likely have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Two factors, company size and office size, appear in the research as considerations in the organization of white collar workers. Many white collar employees work in small companies and offices and, although this picture may be changing, it is in this setting that unions have made little organizational headway. Traditionally, in small companies, the white collar employee has been able to maintain a close relationship with management. It was assumed that the relationship, fostered by size, was direct; white collar employees in large companies would have a high propensity for unionism. Placed in the impersonal setting of large numbers, the employee often found it difficult to communicate, hard to ignore the fact that he is part of a group and progressively more aware of the differences between himself and management. Promotion opportunities are less clearly delineated and new areas of specialization make it difficult to assume that the experience of long service will provide the background for future mobility in the organization.

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that employees of large companies would have a high propensity for unionism. Conversely, employees of small companies would have a

low propensity for unionism.

Table 4-9

Relationship Between Company Size and Union Propensity

	Small Company	Large Company	
Low Propensity	42 (50)	58 (68)	118
High Propensity	37 (39)	63 (67)	106
	89	135	224

$\chi^2 = .52$ (Rejected)

The data in Table 4-9 do not support the hypothesis.

There would appear to be no significant association between company size and low union propensity. It is important however to recognize that not all large companies employed large groups of white collar employees.

e) Office Size

Since most white collar employee respondents were office employees, the concept of size was also tested in the office setting. It was predicted that those respondents employed in a small office would have a low propensity for unionism.

Hypothesis 10

The respondent who works in a small office will have

a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Since the nature of some company operations would permit a small office staff to handle the clerical and administrative work even where the company was fairly large, the group size idea was tested further by identifying the office work groups. It was assumed that this would affect respondent propensity in the same way as projected in the hypothesis on company size. Small offices would be characterized by a large variety of non-routine jobs, direct contact with management, simple as opposed to complex communications channels and a social setting that fostered a sense of belonging. Such a setting would not be conducive to union organizing.¹⁶⁰

ii. Prediction

The larger the office group, the higher the propensity for unionism. Although size itself may not be the critical dimension those aspects of the job which appear to foster an interest in unionism seem manifest most often in large office settings.

The data in Table 4-10 indicate that the hypothesis of association is supported. Low propensity among the respondents tested was more often associated with work in a

small office setting while high propensity respondents most often indicated employment in a larger office setting.

Table 4-10.

Relation Between Office Size and Union Propensity

	Small Office	Large Office	
Low Propensity	57 (67)	43 (51)	118
High Propensity	44 (47)	56 (59)	106
	114	110	224

$$\chi^2 = 3.38 \text{ (p} < .10)$$

f) Company Rules

Unionism has long concerned itself with equity and fairness in the applicability of corporate rules and policies dealing with the employment relationship. Often, where rules were unfair or oppressive, unions have been able to play effective roles as intermediaries between employer and employee. It was in this context that the nature of company rules was tested.

Hypothesis 11

The respondent who finds company rules satisfactory will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Company rules often seem to be at the root of the problems between employer and employee. Certainly such rules represent a major factor in the labor-management relations. As part of the working conditions, union emphasis on job rules is well known and it might be assumed that white collar employees, who felt that the rules they worked under were unsatisfactory, would consider the possibility of unionism as a solution to such problems.

ii. Predictions

Where individuals perceive company rules as satisfactory, they will have a low propensity for unionism. Where the rules are thought unsatisfactory, the respondents will be predominantly high propensity in their expression of union attitude.

The data in Table 4-11 strongly support the hypothesis that where an employee perceives the rules as unsatisfactory there will be an association with a high propensity for unionism.

Table 4-11

Relationship Between Company Rules and Union Propensity

	Rules Satisfactory	Rules Unsatisfactory	
Low Propensity	83 (103)	13 (15)	118
High Propensity	57 (60)	43 (46)	106
	163	61	224

$$\chi^2 = 22.32 \text{ (p} < .001)$$

g) Company Growth

Rapidly growing companies are unique in many ways.

On one side, they often provide above average opportunities for promotion and growth. On the other hand, such growth may also cause a company to make moves that depart from established patterns, raising questions about security, seniority and process of performance evaluation. The following hypothesis was set out to determine if there is a significant association between company growth and union propensity.

Hypothesis 12

A respondent's propensity for unionism will be low when the respondent is employed by a company experiencing above average growth.

i. Background

Growth provides promotion opportunities and the promise of promotion for white collar employees had been put forth by many as one of the key tools in management's repertoire.¹⁶¹ The alternate hypothesis may also find support: that in the confusion that often accompanies rapid growth, change which does not fit the employee's idea of justice and equity may also occur, fostering a desire to organize for protection against the perceived arbitrary nature of the management decision process.

ii. Predictions

It was felt that growth, promotion and union propensity were associated and the prediction that below average growth and high propensity would be directly correlated, ensued.

Table 4-12

Relationship Between Company Growth and Union Propensity

	Below Average Growth	Above Average Growth	
Low Propensity	65 (77)	35 (41)	118
High Propensity	58 (61)	42 (45)	106
	138	86	224

$$\chi^2 = 1.03 \text{ (Rejected)}$$

The data from Table 4-12 do not support the hypothesized association. In fact, the inverse association (rapid growth and high union propensity) may be a more accurate association.

h) Job Interest

Job interest has received a great deal of attention in this age of mass production. Many have contended, among them some labor theorists, that boredom; lack of challenge, (in fact degradation on the job) have resulted in many workers losing all interest in the work they do. Unions are constantly confronted with the problems of job specialization and recently, its impact has been felt in negotiations. It was in this setting that this hypotheses was framed.

Hypothesis 13

The respondent who finds his job interesting will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Job interest and job challenge have long been considered major factors in creating job satisfaction.¹⁶² No doubt, with the growth in white collar ranks, this subject will continue to receive considerable attention. Involvement in a challenging job tends to detract from the individual's interest in other facets of the job, particularly if the economic

benefits of the job are acceptable.¹⁶³ The current interest of management in job enlargement and job enrichment suggests that the whole question of job challenge is important, not only to the employee but also to management.

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that the respondent who found his position interesting and challenging would exhibit a low propensity for unionism.

Table 4-13

Relationship Between Job Interest and Union Propensity

	Job Interesting	Job Interesting	
Low Propensity	48 (57)	52 (61)	118
High Propensity	36 (38)	64 (68)	106
	95	129	224

$$\chi^2 = 2.95 \text{ (p} < .10\text{)}$$

The data from Table 4-13 support the hypothesis as stated, however, the Chi Square test indicates an interdependence with a probability of error of .10.

E. The Management Practices Set

The hypothesis included in this set take into account the following variables:

- a) Management Style
- b) Job Performance Measures
- c) Management Posture
- d) Management Communication
- e) Two-Way Communication
- f) Management Support and Encouragement

a) Management Style

Closely related to management structure, management style has been connected to many organizational phenomena. Some authors,¹⁶⁴ as well as, some labor theorists¹⁶⁵ have suggested that unionism and union objectives arose, in part, due to the oppressive styles of many managements.

Hypothesis 14

The respondent who perceives the management style in his company as participative will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

The question of management style and its implications for union organization are seldom addressed directly in the literature but there are suggested implications for white collar employees. It seems apparent

that white collar employees, sharing some common bond with management, may well have a low propensity for unionism in situations where they perceive an opportunity to participate in management deliberations. Where style is authoritative, any semblance of involvement is destroyed and the traditional bond less easily rationalized. Based on Likert's studies, the style of management was related to the respondents' propensity for unionism. 166

ii. Predictions

Those respondents who saw themselves employed by managements with a participative management style would more often be low propensity respondents than those working in situations where they perceived the style of management to be authoritative. Operating in a mode that depends upon personal qualities and individual effort, the white collar worker is dependent on management response to his actions. Involvement in the deliberations that affect both his job and his advancement are extremely important. A management style that permits some empathy for the needs of the company and its management will foster a commitment to individual involvement, and a low propensity for unionism.

Table 4-14

Relationship Between Styles of Management and Union Propensity

	Authoritative Mgt. Style	Participative Mgt. Style	
Low Propensity	51 (60)	49 (58)	118
High Propensity	63 (67)	37 (39)	106
	127	97	224

$$\chi^2 = 2.93 \text{ (p} < .10)$$

The data in Table 4-14 lend support to the hypothesis as stated, indicating that low propensity is associated more often with participative management styles than with authoritative management styles. (See note on probabilities of error Table 4-20)

b) Company Use of Job Performance Measures

Job performance measures, and the uses they are put to in some companies, are often the cause for a great deal of criticism by employees. The relationship between job performance measures and union propensity is set out in Table 4-15.

Hypothesis 15

The respondent who finds his company's use of job performance measures satisfactory will have a low

propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Perhaps even more than company rules, the whole question of job performance measures causes serious problems in the functioning of many organizations. A well documented blue collar problem, the growth in white collar ranks, and the emphasis on cost effectiveness that often accompanies such growth, could create a major interest in this area. Again, union activities have included a commitment to the maintenance of realistic performance measures. It might be expected that where such measures are viewed by the employees as unrealistic, the interest in unionism will grow.

ii. Predictions

Where performance measures or ratings were perceived as unfair there would be a strong association with high propensity respondents. The direct association between satisfactory job performance ratings and low propensity was also predicted.

The data in Table 4-15 support the hypothesized relationship indicating a significant association between high propensity and job performance ratings which are seen as satisfactory by the respondent.

Table 4-15

Relationship Between Job Performance Rating and Union Propensity

	Job Performance Rating Satisfactory	Job Performance Rating Unsatisfactory	
Low Propensity	51 (60)	49 (58)	118
High Propensity	34 (36)	66 (70)	106
	96	128	224

$$\chi^2 = 5.91 (p < .02)$$

c) Management Posture

Since the industrial revolution, the white collar job holder has had direct access to management, often sharing the management viewpoint. The growth in office size, increased specialization and changing office structures have altered the relationship between management and the white collar worker making the close contact which once characterized most white collar-management settings difficult to maintain.

Hypothesis 16

Respondents who perceive their managements as friendly will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Part of developing a genuine commitment to

management's position seems wrapped up in the employees perception of management's posture.¹⁶⁷ The interest in sharing a management role and, the assumption that as white collar workers they were part of management, seemed to evolve strongly where the employees had reasonably close contact with management. On the other hand, where the employee perceived his management as distant, the management team myth might be severely taxed.¹⁶⁸ The growth in organizations, the increase in the number of white collar workers, and the changes in organization structure; all suggested that management may encounter difficulty in maintaining a direct and friendly relationship with its white collar workers.

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that those who perceived their relationship with management as distant would most often come from the high propensity respondent group. Conversely, where the respondent saw his management as close and friendly there would be a direct association with the low propensity profile.

Apparently, when management's posture is perceived as friendly and cooperative, it is more often associated with low union propensity than high propensity. The data in Table 4-16 support the hypothesized relationship.

Table 4-16

Relationship Between Management Posture and Union Propensity

	Management Close	Management Distant	
Low Propensity	46. (54)	54. (64)	118
High Propensity	24 (26)	76 (80)	106
	80	144	224

$$\chi^2 = 10.63 \text{ (p} < .01\text{)}$$

d) Management Communication

The third and fourth aspects of the management practice set deal with communications in the firm. Where an employee perceived himself as well informed, there could continue a feeling of belonging and an essential sharing of company and management objectives. In the absence of good communication, the white collar employee might develop a feeling of separation, even alienation and, in this state, it was suggested that his interest in unionism might grow.

Hypothesis 17

A respondent who perceives himself as well informed by management will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Information and effective internal communication have

always been essential planks in the union organizing platform. Since the union often plays on management's inability to communicate to the organization, it was assumed that some association between propensity to join, and management information, might exist among white collar workers in the sample.¹⁶⁹ Further, poor communication of change, rather than the nature of the change itself, often challenges the employee's sense of security. A lack of such information makes it extremely difficult to continue believing that white collar people are part of the decision-making process.

iii. Predictions

It was predicted that the respondents who perceived themselves as poorly informed would come mainly from the high propensity respondent group.

Table 4-17

Relationship Between Management Communication and Union Propensity

	Well Informed	Poorly Informed	
Low Propensity	66 (78)	34 (40)	118
High Propensity	46 (49)	54 (57)	106
	127	97	224

$$\chi^2 = 8.11 (p < .01)$$

The data set forth in Table 4-17 confirm the stated hypothesis. Effective management information correlates positively with a low union propensity.

e) Two Way Communication

The second hypothesis, relating to management communications, involves the movement of organizational information in a two-way fashion. In part, at least, this hypothesis may be related to an earlier suggestion that a democratic or participative management style would most often be related to a low propensity for unionism. Here, it is suggested that effective two-way communication, a major factor in the democratic management style, will also be associated with a low propensity for unionism.

Hypothesis 18

Where the respondent perceives two-way communication there will be low union propensity.

i. Background

Being well informed involved only effective one-way communication. A second dimension of the same communications question was also investigated since one of the union's advertised strong points was to make management listen. Whether through negotiation, day-to-day grievance discussions or arbitration, the union has established a role in this process. It was

assumed that effective communication would most often be associated with the low propensity profile.

ii. Predictions

As with hypothesis 17 it was predicted that effective two-way communication would most often be associated with low propensity respondents.

Table 4-18

Relationship Between Two-Way Communications and Union Propensity

	Limited Communication	Two-Way Communication	
Low Propensity	30 (36)	70 (83)	118
High Propensity	53 (56)	47 (49)	106
	92	132	224

$$\chi^2 = 10.00 \text{ (p} < .01\text{)}$$

Table 4-18 indicates a strong support for the hypothesis as stated. Apparently, in those firms where the respondent perceives effective two-way communication taking place, the association points to a low propensity for unionism.

f) Management Support and Encouragement

Perhaps, among the less tangible benefits which accrue

from the job, recognition for work well done ranks as an important extra. Commitment to company and management requires more than money or those extras that can be contracted. It was in this context that support and encouragement from management was thought to be a factor which may be related to union propensity.

Hypothesis 19

The respondent who perceives his management to be supportive and encouraging on the job will have a low propensity for unionism.

i. Background

Supportive management provides perceived opportunities for individual growth and progression in the firm and probably undermines some aspects of the potential union role. Such a supportive management provides a positive environment for involvement, and a sense of belonging which seems to foster a management orientation among white collar employees.

ii. Predictions

It was predicted that where management was perceived as supportive and encouraging in the job setting, respondents would tend to fall into the low propensity group. Conversely, there was predicted a direct association between a management perceived as

non-supportive and the high propensity profile.

Table 4-19

Relationship Between Management Support and Encouragement on the Job and Union Propensity

	Support and Encouragement	Little Support & Encouragement	
Low Propensity	50 (59)	50 (59)	118
High Propensity	36 (38)	64 (68)	106
	97	127	224

$$\chi^2 = 3.99 \text{ (p} < .05)$$

The hypothesis is supported (see Table 4-19) at a level of significance which indicates that the support and encouragement on the job is associated with a low propensity for unionism.

Table 4-20 summarizes the hypotheses and level of support for each of those presented in the study.

In addition to the high and low propensity respondents, data on a third group, the indifferent respondents, was also analyzed. This analysis is presented in Appendix A.

F. General Findings - High and Low Propensity Groups

In addition to the stated hypotheses a number of other

Table 4-20

Summary of Hypotheses and Outcomes

NO.	HYPOTHESES	χ^2	SUPPORTED REJECTED
1.	Non Union Respondent - Low Propensity	41.62	Supported
2.	Age Under 35 Years - Low Propensity	3.93	Supported
3.	Level of Formal Education Over Grade 10 - Low Propensity	2.96	Supported*
4.	Active Engagement in Post Secondary Training - Low Propensity	1.04	Rejected
5.	Father's Occupation Union Supportive - High Propensity	3.43	Supported
6.	High Economic Benefits from Job - Low Propensity	.17	Rejected
7.	Above Average Non Economic Benefits from Job - Low Propensity	11.29	Supported
8.	Organization Structure Permits Direct and Close Involvement - Low Propensity	14.71	Supported
9.	Employed by Small Company - Low Propensity	.52	Rejected
10.	Employed in Small Office - Low Propensity	3.38	Supported
11.	Company Rules Satisfactory - Low Propensity	22.32	Supported
12.	Company Growth High - Low Propensity	1.03	Rejected
13.	Job Interesting - Low Propensity	2.95	Supported*
14.	Management Style Participative - Low Propensity	2.93	Supported*
15.	Company's Use of Job Performance Measures Satisfactory - Low Propensity	5.91	Supported
16.	Management Posture Friendly and Close - Low Propensity	10.63	Supported
17.	Respondent Well Informed - Low Propensity	8.11	Supported
18.	Two-Way Communication Between Management and Employee - Low Propensity	10.00	Supported
19.	Support and Encouragement From Management - Low Propensity	3.99	Supported

* A Chi Square of: $2.706 = p < .10$, $3.841 = p < .05$, $5.412 = p < .02$, $6.635 = p < .01$, $10.827 = p < .001$, indicating the degree of interdependency and the probability of error involved. Source: R.A. Fisher and F. Yates Statistical Tables for Biological, Agricultural and Medical Research, Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1943, Table 4. Degrees of Freedom $(2-1)(2-1) = 1.1$ all hypotheses tested. (The study rejected as unsupported those hypotheses with a $p < .10$)

questions were analyzed to provide further insights into the characteristics, needs, perceptions and desires of both propensity groups. The differences and similarities are presented here without any assumptions about outcome.

Two dimensions of service length were investigated: time with the present employer, and time on the present job. On the first dimension, time with present employer, a significantly greater number of the high propensity group were long time employees (over 6 years) than were those of the low propensity group. On the matter of time on the present job however, there were no significant differences, with approximately similar proportions from each propensity group in the under five year category.

Salary periods have been identified by some as a status symbol or at least a way of differentiating between factory and office workers. Respondents in this study appear to break down as expected with a significant majority of the low propensity respondents receiving their salaries calculated on a monthly or bi-weekly basis (73%) while more than 50% of the high propensity group had their remuneration calculated on a weekly or hourly basis. On the matter of overtime pay, it went most often to the high propensity respondent although the difference was less pronounced than that evident in the salary-wage breakdown.

The question of education since leaving school was addressed by Hypothesis 4 and the data suggested no significant difference on this dimension between the propensity groups. Approximately 75% from both have taken one type of course or another since leaving school. Some additional insights are provided with the analysis of three related questions. On the question of why the course was taken, almost 60% of both high and low propensity groups indicated a job oriented reason. When asked if the employer was aware that the course was being taken a similar 60% of both groups indicated an awareness. However, when asked about employer encouragement in this endeavour, the low propensity respondent indicated a positive response significantly more often than their high propensity counterparts.

Another area of concern, that of layoffs, was investigated to determine both the degree of layoff experience and its association with union propensity, if any. Layoffs were not major occurrences in either response group (31% of the high propensity group had experienced a layoff) but the difference was significant with fewer than 15% of the low propensity group having experienced a layoff. Perhaps, a more indicative measure would have been layoff frequency but this was not done.

The questions of promotion and opportunities for promotion (or lack of them) are often discussed as reasons

for rising union interest. Three separate questions dealt with the issue. The first, how would you rate your prospects for promotion? indicated that low propensity respondents saw their possibilities as good, significantly more often than high propensity respondents. Next, the respondents were asked if advancement in their company was based on performance? Better than 66% of the low propensity group agreed that it was, while less than 37% of the high propensity respondents thought performance a relevant factor in advancement. On a similar question, this time posed in reverse, promotion is not related to proven abilities, 60% of the low propensity respondents disagreed while only 34% of the high propensity respondents took exception to the statement.

Finally, the respondents were asked to agree or disagree with two statements: (a) "there was no significant prestige or status associated with their jobs." Less than 60% of the low propensity respondents agreed while over 75% of the high propensity respondents agreed; and (b) "the job does not provide opportunities to advance in social position." Only 38% of the low propensity respondents agreed while almost 60% of the high propensity respondents were able to agree with the statement.

To further document the work group dimension (hypotheses dealing with company size and office size were tested

earlier) a question dealing with work group size was proposed. The results showed a significant difference in work group size between the two propensity groups. Over 75% of the low propensity people identified themselves with a small work group within the firm while only 45% of the high propensity group were part of a small work group.

The questions of social class and political outlook were dealt with in numerous studies of blue collar workers. Such studies have left the impression that blue collar workers typically place themselves in the working or lower classes while, white collar workers perceive themselves as middle class inhabitants. Politically, the literature would lead the observer to believe that most blue collar workers are of a liberal-socialist persuasion while the white collar worker shares the conservative views attributed most often to management. Both the class and the political assumptions seem supported in respondent data. Over 60% of the low propensity group perceives itself to be middle-upper middle class. Fewer than 45% of the high propensity group placed themselves in the middle class categories. On the political side 45% of the low propensity group were of a conservative persuasion while that figure dropped to 25% for the high propensity respondents.

The question of job interest was addressed under an earlier hypothesis. In a related question dealing with

repetitive activities on the job, almost 55% of the low propensity respondents felt that their job was characterized by repetitive tasks compared with 75% from the high propensity group. Perhaps as interesting as the difference, is the degree of perceived overall repetitiveness in the jobs held by these white collar respondents.

Earlier in the study the dimension of participative management was shown to have a significant association with low propensity. It is interesting to note that in response to a statement, "I don't participate in decisions or the selection of tools to be used in my work", only 15% of the low propensity agreed, 46% of the high propensity group agreed with the statement.

Finally, low propensity respondents felt that performance measures were well known, that the prime concern for motivating and controlling lay with all levels of management as opposed to only with top management and generally held more favorable attitudes toward the company than did their high propensity counterparts. See Appendix A for detailed figures on each question included in the questionnaire.

Footnotes - Chapter IV

142. The research sample included 309 respondents classified as follows:

1. Union-Industrial	77
2. Union-White Collar	105
3. Non-Union	<u>127</u>
Total	309

and

1. High Propensity Respondents	118
2. Mixed Propensity Respondents*	82
3. Low Propensity Respondents	<u>106</u>
Total	306**

* Mixed propensity respondents are dealt with later in this study, see Appendix A.

** Three questionnaires deleted from the propensity analysis due to incomplete information. See page 146.

143. The Ontario Labour Relations Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1960, F.I. Boggs, Queens Printer, Toronto. Revised 1970.

144. Section 7, paragraphs 2,3 and 4.

145. Perlman, Labor Union Theories in America: Background and Development, Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson and Company, 1958.

146. See, for example, Bambrick, J.J. "Unionization Among American Engineers", Studies in Personnel Policy, National Industrial Conference Board, No.155 (1956). Also B. Goldstein, "Unions and the Professional", The Journal of Business, pp. 1268-75 (1954) and Taft, "Why Engineers Join Unions", Personnel, 34:66-71 (1957)

147. Bairstow, "White Collar Workers and Collective Bargaining". pp. 71-72.

148. Frumhartz, "Unionization of the White Collar Worker" p. 17.

149. pp. 24-26.

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151. Johnson, D.B. "Blue to White Collar Job Mobility", Univ. of Wisc. Ind. Relns. Res. Inst., (1968) and T.V. Purcell, Blue Collar Man: Patterns of a Dual Allegiance in Industry, Boston: Harvard University Press, 1960. pp. 78-97.
152. Where the job title suggested a job class or job that might normally be found in a union membership grouping the job was termed union supportive.
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163. pp. 32-34.

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- 167. pp. 89-96.
- 168. pp. 44-51.
- 169. T.O.P. Bulletin, p. 4.

CHAPTER V

WHITE COLLAR WORKERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Will the union movement ever penetrate private sector white collar ranks to the degree it has among blue collar workers? Can it match the growth that organizers have achieved, more recently, in the public sector? What explains the differences? What actions by participants, governments, unions, management and employees might alter the balance in favor of organizers? Can employers, now essentially in a holding action, maintain their position with white collar employees in the face of impending change?

Few employees, once organized, ever decertify. Thus, on the surface, at least for management, prevention is the only sure way to keep their employees outside the union fold. In a philosophical sense, time favors organized labor. As employer organizations grow, structures become more complex, communications up and down the organization become more complicated and value sharing between management and employee gets more difficult. For management, dealing with many of these changes is troublesome and there is a tendency to resort to the more easily defined and administered

economic solutions. Surveys of area and industry wages and fringe benefits produce manageable comparisons which enable the maintenance of a competitive posture. No doubt this has a substantial impact on the white collar worker as long as he believes that the prime thrust of the union movement is one of economic protection. But the non-economic dimension of the white collar job raises many questions for both union and management. Unions have yet to learn how to exploit these non-economic needs for organizing purposes. Management, on the other hand, is faced with the increasingly difficult task of meeting them in the changing structure of developing organizations. Promotions, non-monetary fringe benefits, workplace atmosphere, in fact many of the white collar job characteristics, which differ from those found in the blue collar setting, are becoming more difficult to use as the white collar population grows. Economic solutions to these problems of change may give increased credibility to the evident strengths of union involvement on behalf of the white collar worker. Such solutions, however, give the unions nothing unique in their struggle for new white collar members.

Why hasn't the white collar worker joined? Is it simply that his first perception of the union's skills and his needs have little in common? Or, is it because he has few problems and management's approach is satisfactory in most situations. No doubt the answers are complicated.

In fact there are no simple answers to the complex questions facing both managements and unions in the area of white collar employment.

To research the area of private sector, white collar interest, the thesis questions had to be restated. Dunlop asked, why does the worker join?¹⁷⁰ Certain assumptions had to be made and the questions subdivided to elicit meaningful data. The complex aspects of the research task centered around the development of the data to answer specific administrative questions surrounding the past, present and future actions of white collar workers in the private sector.

A. The Research Objectives

The study had as its objective, the exploration of quantitative data relating to some of the many factors that impact on the individual white collar worker's propensity to join unions, and his decision to do so. The statistical answer to the questions about white collar joining is simply, they do not! But changes are taking place. The unions are making some progress in the private sector and it would seem relevant to the question of why they join to:

- a) identify the factors that are part of most white collar jobs;
- b) determine if they are associated to one's propensity to join (high or low) and;

- c) identify the influences that can be exerted over these factors by the system's participants to induce positive and negative attitudes toward joining a white collar union.

The research question set forth earlier in the thesis was, do those white collar employees who have a high propensity for unions hold attitudes toward job, company and management that differ significantly from the attitudes of white collar employees who have a low propensity for unionism? The research objective was to isolate the factors associated with high and low respondent propensities in order to identify the options and implications for future action by unions, managements and governments.¹⁷¹

B. The Organizing Environment

Viewing the traditional roles of government, business and unions set out in the industrial relations system, it is evident that most of the factors influencing propensity associations, are currently in the areas encompassed by management rights ideology. Or, more simply put, the key relationships, between a propensity for unionism and job factors, center around variables which are currently controlled by management action. This suggests, where management continues to meet white collar needs, that the ability of the union to identify problems and service particular needs is greatly diminished. Income, fringe benefits and

income security do not appear to be dimensions of the job along which a union strategy, or, for that matter, a company strategy, can be devised to appeal consistently to either high or low propensity groups. The associations along other dimensions such as management style, organization structure and other non-economic aspects of the job, indicate distinct differences. These may provide some insight into potential change strategies for each of the participants who are party to the industrial relations system.

Other factors, often associated with a low propensity for unionism, do not stand the test of this respondent sample. Company growth and its purported opportunities are associated more often with high propensity. And, although a higher level of formal education is associated with low propensity, post secondary education or training is undertaken to the same degree by both high and low propensity respondents. Company size is another element that produced no significant differences in propensity associations.

On the other hand, many of the predicted relationships were upheld, suggesting that they are elements, at least in one's attitude formation, that lead to the development of a high or low propensity for unionism. These elements are set forth schematically (independent variables) in Figure 5-1.

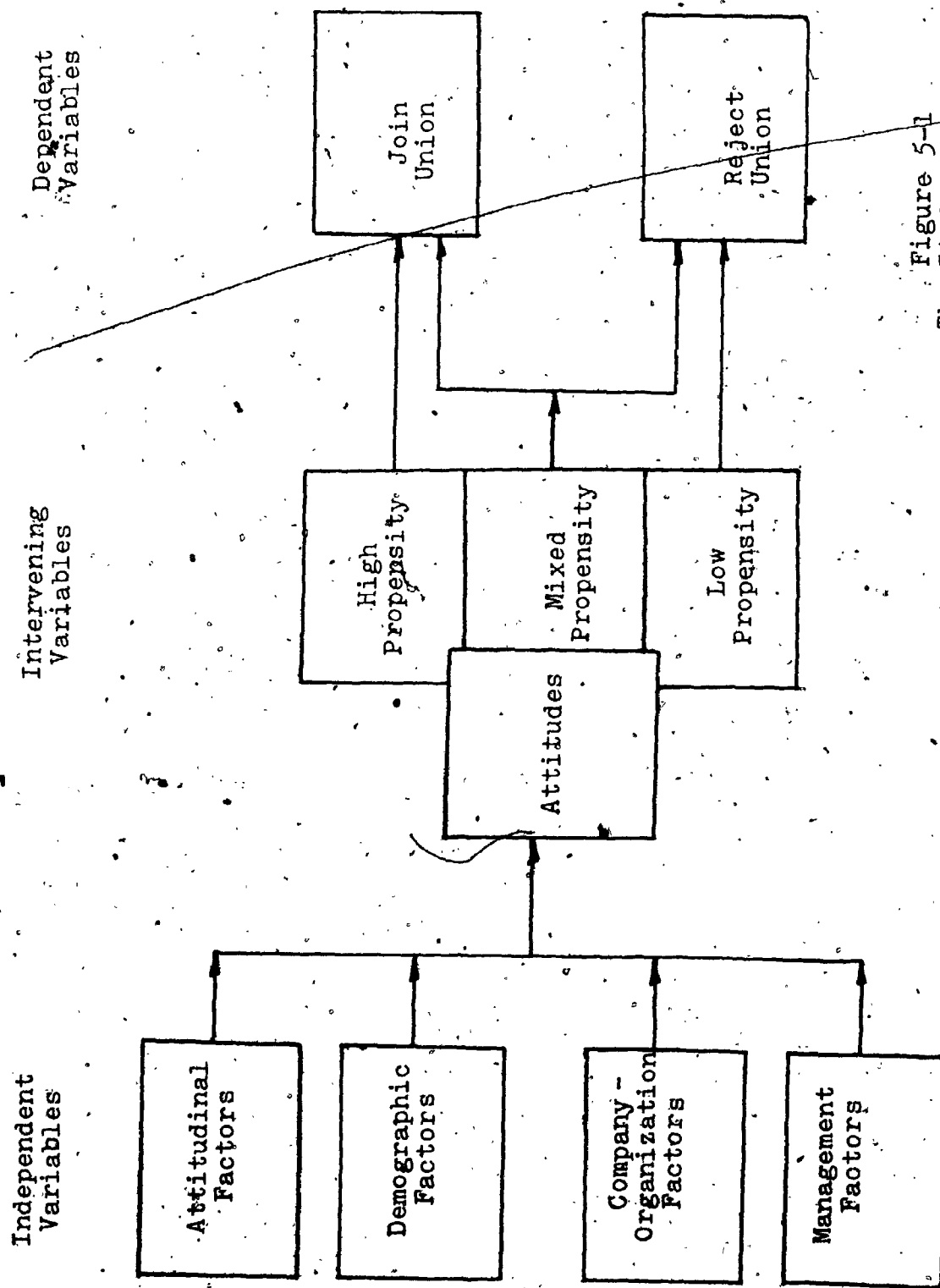


Figure 5-1
The Study Framework

If an individual seeks the most effective combination of job returns to meet his needs he likely will seek such returns from the agency or participant in the system (government, employer or union) that he perceives best able to satisfy his requirements. Income, income security and fringe benefits have constituted areas where union involvement has been acceptable to some groups of white collar workers but this acceptance has been limited. Traditionally, job satisfaction has been left to the employer while off-the-job satisfaction has been left largely to the government, society and the individual.

From the data associations set forth in the research, it would appear that increased union influence with the white collar worker will depend largely on the union's ability to develop a credible role as an effective participant in the determination of job factors that have long been the sole prerogatives of management. Management, whose task it is to maintain the credibility of its traditional sphere of influence, must insure that the needs of the employee are satisfied, particularly if it is management's objective to retain wide influence over job decision-making.

The dilemma facing unions is threefold. First, there is the need to expand membership, which, because of the changing blue collar-white collar proportions in the workforce, must come from a significant increase in white

collar membership. Second, the growing involvement of governments, in the job setting, poses new threats to available union roles. Pensions, unemployment benefits, minimum wages legislation, statutory holidays and other universal programs have removed many of the causes around which unions once organized. And finally, unions will be required to develop skills in the area of work relationships, a role where the union has little experience, but one which may determine their future growth in the white collar sector.

For the manager the choices seem more clear-cut. Many of the job elements that have remained within the scope of his control appear to be the elements that could prove extremely important in limiting white collar organizing successes. There appear to be a number of job factors associated with union propensity that the manager can manipulate. Management performance has concentrated on a variety of factors in the management-white collar relationship and as long as the employer does not allow his relationship to be reduced to a simple economic-security issue, he may have the opportunity to satisfy the non-monetary aspects of the employment relationship without union involvement.

There appear to be few personal factors at work to alter the traditional relationships between management and the white collar worker. For example age, education and social class all seem to be moving in a direction where

the associations favor the growth of low propensity attitudes. The average age of the workforce is moving down with fewer and fewer white collar workers aware of the history and events of union growth. Levels of education are rising and more white collar workers, by virtue of both income and position, are likely to be almost automatic candidates for "middle class" existence.

Job factors, such as organization structure, management style, company rules and internal communications, which remain strongly entrenched in the management sphere of influence, are likely to emerge as critical issues in the future. However, there is evidence that the white collar worker will continue to seek solutions to his problems in this area through a direct dialogue with management, because unions, so far, lack both the skills and the credibility to fill these needs. To the extent that management succeeds in insuring that the management-white collar relationship is not reduced to an economic-security issue and; responding to the non-economic job needs, unions will continue to encounter difficulty in attracting the allegiance of the non-professional white collar worker.

The government role with respect to the white collar worker is not entirely clear. While all levels of government have undertaken programs that influence the roles of each group (management, union and government) in the system,

few of these programs have resulted in any significant changes. For example, there have been no moves on the part of governments to facilitate organization in smaller companies, across company lines. Such small companies, because they often pay lower wages and provide fewer fringe benefits, could provide fertile ground for new organization. However, because of their small size these company units, under present legislation, are often impractical to organize. In the area of bargaining unit definition the government has, under its legislation, included a blanket provision for its members to organize.¹⁷² In the private sector available legislation is interpreted far less liberally.¹⁷³ Current applications of the case law in the area of white collar organizing makes each situation unique, providing many opportunities for delay and uncertainty in private sector organizing.

There have been several proposals, both from the Royal Commissions and other studies, that have been incorporated into government policy. For example, the Federal Government is actively engaged in the promotion of labor-management cooperation,¹⁷⁴ a program that encourages involvement in many of the non-economic aspects of the job. There is legislation at the provincial level (Ontario) dictating advanced notice in the case of layoffs. The recent inclusion of clauses, in some contracts, which allow union participation in technological change problems is also an outgrowth of government concern.

These have defined some new areas of union involvement which eventually may have white collar organizing significance.

Another area of involvement that is likely to have important ramifications for union development in the future is that of government employment practices. Collective bargaining breakthroughs in the civil service may guide the development of new areas of union influence in the private sector. Such breakthroughs,¹⁷⁵ if they occur in the public sector, might provide unionism with a vehicle for expanding its narrow base in such a way that it could appeal to a much broader cross-section of unorganized white collar workers.

While governments could adopt both programs and legislation which altered white collar propensity for unionism, as well as increase the opportunity to join, to date they have not. Nor is there any significant evidence, at this time, that they will move much further in this direction. The biggest impact on private sector organizing may well come from the achievements of unions in the public sector, although this too can be mitigated by both management and government in the private sector.

Why do some white collar workers join unions while others reject the advances of union organizers? Clearly the lack of consensus represents more than just a lack of research. No doubt there are many factors which influence

the position of white collar workers at any point in time such as, the job market, the position of their managements on unions; and the availability of unions interested in the task of organizing what are often uneconomic or marginally interested units.

But there is not a single answer for why some join and others do not. It is not clear from other studies of white collar behavior, nor is it clear from this one that any single factor or group of factors are dominant in the decisions of some to share management values, while others opt for union values in the job setting. In fact, one might ask what are union values or management values? Are they always different or dichotomous? Are all managements anti-union while they still have the choice? Obviously there is not a single answer for all situations and, as management values span the spectrum from the authoritative to the participative, so too do union values. To the extent that one group recognizes and accepts the values of the other, thereby modifying its own, the potential for shared positions may be increased. But this ignores the central objective of most organizers and the central issue of the study - where in the spectrum of possible positions are the needs of white collar workers best met? Let us consider three possibilities. The first possibility (a) represents a position where most of the white collar group needs are satisfied by a traditional management position toward the factors

which affect white collar jobs and job needs. The position would suggest that management can, without the help (or interference) of a third party, satisfy the job expectations of the group. The second position (b) is the polar opposite of (a). In this possibility white collar workers share union values and their needs are best met through this association (the union acts as an agent for both worker and management in a sense). Such a position characterizes those situations where a power relationship is evident. The major purpose of the union is to provide a power base from which the employee can deal effectively with management. The third position (c) perhaps the most common, even where no union exists, represents a shared value position. In such a position there is some recognition that the values of both groups can add to the total effectiveness of the company's operations whether spawned by either union or management. Perhaps the most important question is the one raised by many labor theorists who, on one hand, suggest that the role of the union cannot be played as successfully by a well meaning management - sooner or later all workers will join the movement. On the other hand, is the suggestion by other labor men that unions rose to right the abuses of management in the employment relationship and, if management ceases to play the role of labor exploiter the union role would have to undergo some dramatic changes. Generally then these issues are central to the environment in which white collar organizing takes place. Can management identify

the factors which influence a change in attitudes towards unions by white collar workers? Can unions identify those aspects of union activity which might appeal to potential new members? What factors change employee attitudes, making a group loyal to management or, interested in unionizing at any point in time.

As the research could not take place in a controlled setting only associations can be identified, not cause and effect relationships.

What does influence white collar workers to accept or reject white collar union membership? Are there strong associations between union propensity and those job factors controlled by management? Are there associations between factors of the job, personality and individual background which can be exploited by union organizers in an attempt to increase white collar interest in union membership?

C. White Collar Reactions to Economic Issues

Certainly the most visible and often the most important issue of the job relationship is the question of economic benefit. As the item most easily quantified, the economic benefits become the focal point for employer-employee discussions. Comparison possibilities abound. Claims by unions and managements tend to confuse the issue. By both word and action, economic benefits are front and

center in the employment relationship. Are these items necessarily associated more with union oriented employees than non-union? The data suggest not. Both high and low propensity groups perceive themselves as recipients of below average economic benefits. The associational strength is similar for both groups suggesting that economic benefits are not differentiating factors between them. One suspects, since economic benefits are easily communicated, that competitive salaries form a minimum requirement. But there is no evidence, from this study, to suggest that an employee who perceives his salary and other economic benefits as below average will necessarily be part of a high propensity group. Economic benefits are not clearly distinguishable as a major associational factor between propensity groups. Management's, who believe that a simple economic response to potential white collar organization threats will provide a long term, effective solution, have every reason to expect disappointment. Interestingly enough, however, unions who look to organizing white collar workers, will also have to find broader, more relevant appeals. For the union this poses a serious handicap, since most people see the movement as having its greatest impact on economic issues.

D. The Non-Economic Issues and White Collar Propensity

Low propensity respondents perceive themselves as

employed in situations where above average non-economic benefits are part of the job situation. Coincidentally, most of the job aspects included under non-economic benefits are factors still largely controlled by the management decision process. These include job challenge, job interest and working conditions; factors where management decisions are largely unimpeded by company comparisons, guidelines published by government and industry sources or direct competitive pressures. The association between low propensity and high non-economic benefits is clear and significant, based on the data gathered in the study. It suggests that, if maintaining a low propensity posture among white collar employees is a desired objective, management attention to these kinds of issues could have a continuing payoff.

Unions, on the other hand, have a much more difficult task identifying and communicating across company differences in the area of non-economic issues, such as those included in the scale. The more traditional role of the union has been one where they have tried to insure that jobs be defined in such a way that comparisons could be made. However, since the people who hold white collar jobs differ in many important ways, the job similarity approach runs the risk of appearing to introduce characteristics which reduce job challenge and minimize job interest.

Since unions, at least until recently, have done.

little work in the area of job challenge and interest,¹⁷⁶ their effectiveness in taking a viable position, even where it is evident that management is ignoring the issue, was greatly impaired. They offered as a solution, more leisure time or high economic benefits, perhaps not solutions at all.

The data from this hypothesis raised the distinct possibility that management can influence propensity through its use of non-economic job benefits. It appears important that decisions in this area recognize the needs of both company and employee and, that this recognition be an integral part of the change process which must inevitably affect all jobs in a competitive setting. No doubt such considerations will require some short and long term job trade-offs. Efficiency and effectiveness need be considered jointly in any cost-benefit analysis related to white collar job changes. These then must be communicated to the involved individual in order that he understand both the causes and outcomes which alter his job involvement. It is possible that union exploitation in these areas is facilitated by a lack of information or misinformation from management.

For the union, taking advantage of the situation where employees see themselves involved with a company and job that offers below average non-economic benefits, the

task is less clear. Job challenge and job interest seem to involve complexities that run contrary to a basic objective of making conditions and job content explicit. The freedom, interest and challenge often associated with white collar jobs appear contradictory to the contractual approach that is part of union and collective bargaining relationships. The union emphasis on monetary items, and its attachment to seniority reflect an interest in the visibility of its achievements - a visibility often required to marshal broad based support.¹⁷⁷

1. Propensity and its Associations With the Organization Structure

Much has been made in the literature of the traditional white collar attachment to management and management values. More recently the issue has focused, within the organization, on changes which seem to be driving a wedge into the traditional relationships. Changes in communications techniques, new methods of control and a move toward impersonalizing the management approach to motivation, make it difficult for lower level management and clerical personnel to continue with the assumption that they are important members of the management team. The specialization required in many organizations often demands training and skills unavailable from within. New employees fill the void, interfering with the internal promotion process.

The data indicates a difference in perceived

involvement with management between the two propensity groups. It is interesting to note that even the low propensity group is evenly split (47% see close involvement with management in their organization while the high propensity group shifts dramatically to the distant involvement category). The evidence suggests a clear association between propensity and the perceived involvement with management available through the organization structure.¹⁷⁸

Thus, changing office and company organization structures may have implications for employee attitudes toward unions and union representation in the work setting. Even greater emphasis could be placed on the reported association if the structural changes result in organizational confusion and uncertainty. For many who have a big investment in the existing structure, any departure or change which affects progression or job content can be unsettling.

For companies wishing to minimize the openings for union interest among their employees, reorganizing should receive careful consideration. Structures that achieve both company and individual objectives are not necessarily incompatible, and such consideration should be a serious concern where major changes are contemplated.

Unions have made little attempt to exploit the unrest that arises from structural change. Even though such changes

have been recognized by many writers, little has been done within union ranks to understand or exploit the potential opportunities that exist here, particularly where the changes are mismanaged and there is a resultant loss of security among affected employees. Management is often caught in a competitive squeeze (market-budget) which necessitates structural change (i.e. decentralization) although few of these have been effectively exploited by the unions.

2. Management Style and Union Propensity

Management style has received detailed attention in both the research and management literature although little has been published on management style as a factor in the growth or interest in white collar unions. Only recently have the unions begun to formulate a total approach to the basic issues affecting style. Prior to the Canadian Labour Congress meeting in Edmonton (1969) at which time the question of "industrial democracy" was addressed, the union approach to problems of management style was mainly legal and contractual. Participation, consultation and approval of changes affecting union and employee security, displacement due to technological and market changes and other issues, long in the management domain, promise to impact directly on traditional management styles. Authoritative styles were strongly associated with high propensity respondents, while the more participative styles were associated with low propensity respondents.

3. Age and Union Propensity

The issue of age and its association with respondent propensity for unionism has been discussed by several writers and, three factors seem dominant in their explanations for the lack of interest in union membership by the younger segments of the workforce:

- a) the lack of direct involvement by this group in the struggles of the union movement for recognition and legitimacy in the employer-employee relationship;
- b) the lower level of disenchantment held by those new to the workforce and;
- c) the "myth" that education guarantees promotion, job challenge and real participation in the decision process.

Of the several factors researched, age, an easy and direct factor to measure, shows a significant association with propensity. In the group measured, those under age 35 do, in fact, come more often from the low propensity groups.

For management, the clerk belongs to a large and growing group of individuals who are a part of the workforce with potential to share management values. They represent, at least those under age 35, a fertile area in which the employer can maintain a low propensity stance toward union

membership. For the union, efforts to develop membership interest in this age group will probably have to center around issues that are relevant to these employees while recognizing that union work and effectiveness in other areas, such as the blue collar segment, carry little weight. Organizers will have to develop an awareness of individual and group issues. Both the union approach and public image will have to be modified to reflect such interests. No doubt the union will have to add to its organizing ranks, individuals who understand the position and aspirations of the younger white collar workers, since organization in this setting will frequently not center around the hostility of badly deteriorated management-employee relationships, but rather frustrated aspirations.

4. Education and Union Propensity

Formal education levels have achieved wide use in the business setting and particularly so in the area of white collar jobs. The trend, since World War II, has been accentuated by the increasing dependence of management on specialists and specialist training. This is particularly true at the professional level, but even outside of the professional requirements management has tended to make many direct associations between job and educational levels. As a result, such qualifications have become an important factor in hiring and promotion practices. There is also emerging evidence to suggest that for some jobs there is a surplus of people with high education levels, indicating at

least the possibility that many will have to accept work that has little challenge and limited future opportunities. The situation, arising from unfulfilled expectations, is likely to create frustrations that cannot be satisfied by management in the job setting.

For management, adherence to educational requirements can pose problems as well. First, there is the fact that changing practice and technology may minimize the need for this background among large numbers of the white collar group. For many, the educational requirements to get jobs and promotions often exceed the requirements to fill the job, creating frustration and loss of interest. The second problem arises as managements fill the more challenging jobs with outsiders and specialists because inside training is inadequate or non-existent. These actions, not always easily controllable by management, may alter white collar propensities for union membership.

The data from this study however, suggest that the traditional assumptions about education and union membership are supported for non-professional white collar respondents - the higher the level of education, the lower the probability of a respondent sharing union values in the job setting.

Taking such information into consideration, the union, once again, is faced with the need to capitalize on

potential frustration, a frustration stemming from the inability of well educated employees to achieve their career goals in the job setting. Because the white collar segment experiences few layoffs (management usually softens the impact in this area by attrition) the ability of unions to focus on the job security issue is impaired. The impact, on employee awareness of job security caused by layoffs, seldom accrues to the union organizer, rather, he must seek his gains in the shortfall between employee aspirations and achievement, a substantially more difficult task than the one that faced organizers in the blue collar sector.

Managements must be aware of the implications of rising educational levels and the aspirations which accompany them. Developing and designing challenging jobs and opportunities to participate in the meaningful work will become more important. An awareness of contribution and performance will be central to the prevention of frustration which may provide a niche for the unions to begin a campaign for membership. Fairness and equity are often important ingredients in assuring that the employee will voice both normal frustration and complaints within the employer-employee system. Without these, the problems of the job may come to the attention of an outside group, providing that hard-to-get entry for union organizers.

5. Propensity and Post-Secondary Training

On the surface, at least, post-secondary training presents a different picture than the formal education dimension. The hypothesis, that those who had acquired post secondary training would most often be associated with the low propensity group, was not supported. Three factors are evident in the group who had post secondary training. These need to be explored before any conclusions can be drawn from the rejected hypothesis:

1. The majority of the respondents in the sample had taken their post secondary training while on the job.
2. The management, in a majority of these cases, were neither aware nor personally supportive of the course work although, in some cases, the company involved paid part or all of the course cost.
3. Many of the courses taken were not directly related to the job currently held by the respondent.

Only in the case of those respondents who were taking courses perceived by them as having the potential of enhancing promotion prospects was some significant difference in propensity relationships evident. However, the number involved was too small to draw statistically meaningful conclusions.

For management there may be implications in the growing tendency to support the educational ventures of employees financially, and ignore them otherwise. It might be assumed that employees who take job related training courses do so out of some interest in their work and, in that sense, it could be extremely frustrating to have such efforts go without recognition from management. In larger firms a number of methods for recognition have emerged. Job bidding and counselling (Polaroid), interdepartmental promotions based on planned training (General Steel Wares) and strict adherence to a promotion from within policy; these tend to focus management attention on the employees' outside activities and go beyond the monetary involvement written into many company policies.

Several additional hypotheses from the study impact on potential management actions directed at lessening employee interest in union activity. While there was no significant association between company size and propensity, office size and work group size did stand out in the associations. The data suggest support for the idea that small work group settings tend to permit situations where the employee can feel involved, can have contact with decision-makers and can more readily identify his contributions to the organization.

Company rules provide another area in which propensity

associations were evident. Traditionally, the white collar worker has experienced a high degree of freedom within the employment setting, relative to that of the blue collar worker. No doubt some of the rules, that have emerged in recent situations, are a function of the growth in white collar numbers. They reflect the feeling on the part of management that such a group may require somewhat more rigid guidelines than those used in the highly personal, small office setting. Company rules are an easy target on which to focus. For the union organizer, they represent a potentially useful start to generate employee interest. For employees, expected to share a management viewpoint, the rules and their use, particularly if these are markedly different from those applicable to management, can have important implications for the white collar view of its position in the company structure.

Perhaps the most troublesome aspect of any employment relationship is the question of performance measurement. Often characterized by vague criteria, poor communication and inconsistent application, job performance rating ranks as a major management problem wherever merit is used to reward performance. Attention to this area is critical for management, particularly in those growth situations where personal contact between the manager and his employees tends to diminish. Inconsistency in application can be perceived as inequity, and it is on this type of issue that organizers

can build a strong case for the protection of union membership.

Management's relationships with the employee have been cited as an important factor in determining white collar attitudes towards the organizing option. In almost any business setting the task of effective communications receives considerable attention. The study of white collar workers is no exception. The literature provides examples of the negative effects arising in employer-employee relationships from poor communications.¹⁷⁹ Unions, including those who organize white collar workers, stress in their approach, their effectiveness in achieving a free flow of information from management. It is promoted as a key benefit of organizing. The data from this study suggest that many of those responding from poorly informed groups have a high propensity for union membership, indicating a strong association between management information and union propensity.

Two-way communications also play an important role in the management-employee relationship. In addition to having an idea of what is going on in the company from a management point of view, there is considerable evidence to suggest that communicating to management is also extremely important. Again, the unions have promoted this role in the organizing setting, suggesting that a significant improvement in a two-way communications can take place if the union is involved.

For management, reasonably effective two-way communication can reduce this to a non-issue. For the union organizer, the inability of management to listen opens a potentially explosive issue for developing employee interest in union membership.

Finally, the support of management in most employee undertakings seems essential if the employee is to be part of the team. Termed a myth by the union, team involvement in a challenging situation creates a sense of belonging and tends to lessen the fear that could arise as office structures change or increase in size, or as outside specialists are introduced to the management team. In many office settings, there is a growing emphasis on depth of training and experience, as opposed to the breadth of experience promoted in smaller offices. It is in the setting of such change that management support and encouragement is essential if the white collar worker is to adjust without loss of job challenge and job security.

E. Some Implications for Systems Participants

1. Governments

The implications for government are ill-defined and likely to remain so until the industrial relations system is considered in economic planning and growth, regional development and growing government social responsibility. The future of unions may be in the balance if deep and

deliberate consideration is not given to the total system of which they are a part. Certainly, facilitating union growth in an ad-hoc manner may provide short-run solutions. However, these solutions tend to foster confrontations which become aberrations in the collective bargaining system, and often, have little to do with contract negotiation and administration. Recent government involvement in wage price guidelines has hit at the principle of collective bargaining without altering the framework and expectations that surround the process. Government programs to foster labor-management harmony have failed to make a significant impression, primarily because they have no place in the system as it is now defined. The white collar worker has been omitted from the process largely because the system was contrived and tailored to deal with blue collar problems. Even the significant change in workforce proportions, of blue to white collar jobs, has not altered this fact. The Prime Minister's Task Force in Labour Relations makes only scant reference to the white collar worker. The Task Force report re-emphasized traditional roles for government, management and unions when there was growing evidence that some role re-definition was fundamental to the growth and continuation of an effective industrial relations process. Government involvement with white collar workers has been within the existing system which, it appears, does not favor private sector white collar unionization. The real influence of government action will only be felt if it

modifies the system to broaden organizing activities.

As the problems which face national unions have grown to include issues which go far beyond the economic and security needs of individual citizens, so too have the problems which face the industrial relations system grown beyond the simplistic issues envisioned by the guidelines of current legislation. With rapid change the government is confronted with the need to accommodate new forms of activity, such as those involving white collar workers, within the confines of industrial relations policies. Industrial relations is no longer only a subset of the economic sphere. Legislative action must recognize that the system is and, to a growing degree, will be involved in the task of human need satisfaction at levels not envisioned in the economic concept of man. To the extent that the concept of industrial relations, from the government viewpoint, ignores these factors, the system will address only the symptoms of workforce problems, and few of the causes.

2. Unions

For unions, the implications seem somewhat more clean-cut, although the action and outcomes involve risks of dubious payoff since the short term interests of present members is not always consistent with the needs of the unorganized. But failing management and government actions, which make these key issues for the white collar workforce,

income and security are not likely to be issues upon which effective organizing drives can be constructed. The issues of the next decade seem to be emerging around the quality of life not the quantity, and historically, unions have left the quality aspect to employers and society. Any ranking of job factors, which contribute to satisfaction, seldom places the economic aspects of the job very high in the priorities. Unfortunately, it is in the setting of non-economic issues that the unions will have to develop a new image if they are to sell the union to the white collar worker as a viable entity, capable of participating in the achievement of non-economic need satisfaction. Union leaders have little experience with this type of problem. Union staff people tend to reflect the traditional economic objectives of the union movement.

The union, confronted with a need to maintain or increase its constituent base, has several alternatives. One would be to increase its penetration of the blue collar workforce, beyond the current 30-35%. This, of course, is always an open possibility but suffers from some of the problems confronting organizers in the white collar sector; many of the remaining groups lack the numbers essential to organize and support them as union locals. Here too, changes in the legislation may be required to make significant organizing efforts in the area feasible. Additionally, such efforts would take time, dissipate union resources and run

the risk of disenchanting existing members.

It would seem that the short run implications for unions are clear. If membership gains are required, such gains will have to come from the segments of the workforce where the potential for organizing is economically feasible. Unfortunately, the major area of potential is the private sector white collar group, an area where the key union appeals have been weakest. New leadership, new objectives, new skills and a new strategy are required. The differences that exist between present and potential members must be accommodated. The need for involvement, challenge and participation on the job will have to become part of the union strategy. Failing this, the union movement will serve only a working class elite and give way to new forms of representation in the growing, private sectors of the economy.

3. Management

For management the implications are no less complex. In a system that technically and socially is moving toward more rigid bureaucratic forms, there is a need to accommodate the individual. Satisfaction and security, that come from communication and involvement, become increasingly more difficult to provide in the employment relationship. Higher levels of education, and the increased ability to understand, will dictate the need for participation of the workforce in

many of the decisions which affect their future. And, while some managers view such activity as an incursion into management rights, others will view the involvement as an optimization of their human resource potential, and accommodate it accordingly. To the extent that this need for growth is thwarted, it may seek other ways of venting frustration. For example, there could be a shift in white collar emphasis to job factors, such as economics and security, that have little to do with many of the real issues. The data suggest that individual involvement is a general factor associated with low union propensity. Such involvement becomes increasingly difficult for managers to provide in the growing structure of many business settings. In fact, for some, the cost of doing so may suggest that unionism is by far the lesser evil of the two alternatives. But union organization, in and of itself, is not a solution to this problem. Unions too, will have to tend more to individual problems and needs. The issue might well become, as it has in the past, is it more effective to deal with the problems of the employment relationship with or without third party involvement? However, unless management simply fails to recognize and meet these individual needs, thereby forcing white collar employees to look elsewhere, effective union entry into this sector is likely to fail for some time to come.

Footnotes - Chapter V

170. Dunlop, "The Development of Labor Organizations: A Theoretical Framework," Chapter 2.
171. Ideally, the simple question, why do workers join? should be answered. However, except in a controlled experiment, such a question is difficult to answer. It is necessary to frame the question in a way that it can be tested with available data - the use of propensities is an attempt to achieve this.
172. Section 3 of the Public Service Staff Relations Act, R.S.C., 1970 EP-35 states: "(The) Act applies to all portions of the public service."
173. See Canvill Transport Limited, 52 CLLC, para. 16,617 at p. 1319, "The Board (Canadian Labour Relations Board) does not consider it either feasible or advisable to formulate rigid rules for applications in determining an appropriate bargaining unit."
174. Teamwork in Industry, a joint federal-provincial undertaking to promote the cooperation of management and labor.
175. Edwards, Claude. President of the Public Service Alliance, Speech to a White Collar Personnel-Management Seminar, "A Trade Union Official Views the Personnel-Management Scene", June 11, 1971. Among the breakthroughs Mr. Edwards foresees: a) a reduction in the number of managerial exclusions, b) the placing in bargaining of transfer, promotion and demotion when reorganization takes place and merit systems to be protected by the Public Service Commission, p. 20.
176. The union approach is often perceived as one which condones, even fosters job boredom and emphasizes the minimization of time on the job (rest periods, substitutes and shorter hours) as opposed to bargaining for more flexibility and challenge in the job setting. Various suggestions emerge on the union viewpoint toward job enrichment. Some see it as management trickery, some as a way of getting more work from the employee and others, as a way of crossing skill boundaries. The union attitude toward job enrichment is not clear and no doubt would have to be studied in detail before any conclusions could be drawn on its acceptability to unions.
177. Henderson, James A., et al. Creative Collective Bargaining, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 1963, pp.194-229. The United Steelworkers of America

and representatives of United States Steel Corp., attempted to deal jointly with some of the human relations problems of the industry. David MacDonald, U.S.W. president, experienced major problems in obtaining rank and file support in these undertakings. In fact, the effort became a major factor in his subsequent demise as union president.

178. Involvement with management is also a function of the manager's style. This is explored separately.
179. Likert, New Patterns of Management, pp. 44-60. See also, Edgar H. Schein, Organizational Psychology, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965.

APPENDIX A

Respondent Profile Summary (in percentages)

	Average All Respondents	Low Propensity	Indifferent	High Propensity
Education - up to 10/ over 10	25/75	23/77	17/83	34/66
Office Size - small/large	50/50	57/43	51/49	44/56
Salary Basis - hourly, weekly/ bi-weekly, monthly	41/59	27/73	34/66	50/50
Overtime Pay - yes/no	77/23	77/23	66/34	87/13
Father's Occupation - union support/ union reject	43/57	37/63	40/60	50/50
Member of Family in Union - yes/no	50/50	50/50	43/57	53/47
Education since Leaving School - yes/no	75/25	74/26	77/23	75/25
Reason for Taking Education - job orientation/other*	62/13	61/14	70/14	56/15
Employer Aware - yes/no*	63/11	64/10	67/10	60/15
Employer Encouraged the Taking of Courses - yes/no*	52/13	57/12	55/13	45/16
Layoff Experienced - yes/no	20/80	15/85	13/87	31/69
Promotion Prospects - good/poor	62/38	68/32	67/33	55/45

Appendix A (continued)

	<u>Average All Respondents</u>	<u>Low Propensity</u>	<u>Indifferent</u>	<u>High Propensity</u>
Management - friendly, cooperative/ indifferent	38/62	46/54	48/52	24/76
Management Information - well informed/poorly informed	58/42	66/34	66/34	46/54
Work Group Size - small/large	58/42	74/36	54/46	45/55
Wages - above average/below average	23/77	24/76	20/80	26/74
Fringe Benefits - above average/ below average	35/65	38/62	38/62	32/68
Company Rules - satisfactory/ unsatisfactory	73/27	87/13	85/15	57/43
Job Performance Rating System - satisfactory/unsatisfactory	46/54	51/49	57/43	34/66
Handling of Complaints - satisfactory/ unsatisfactory	58/42	57/43	66/34	52/48
Information Available - satisfactory/ unsatisfactory	60/40	62/38	71/29	51/49
Salary - satisfactory/unsatisfactory	55/45	52/48	64/36	52/48
Job Interesting - yes/no	52/48	48/52	71/29	36/64
Boss <u>not</u> Considerate - agree/disagree	30/70	33/67	21/79	36/64

Appendix A (continued)

	<u>Average All Respondents</u>	<u>Low Propensity</u>	<u>Indifferent</u>	<u>High Propensity</u>
Have Contact with Interesting People - agree/disagree	78/22	77/23	87/13	75/25
Do Well in Job, Expect Opportunities - agree/disagree	44/56	47/53	56/44	34/66
Promotions are Made From Within - agree/disagree	81/19	86/14	85/15	76/24
See Task Through to Completion - agree/disagree	80/20	81/19	93/7	69/31
Advancement Based on Results - agree/disagree	46/54	66/34	60/40	37/63
Job Involves Close Work Relationship with Supervisor - agree/disagree	69/31	79/21	73/27	66/34
Get Support and Encouragement on the Job - agree/disagree	41/59	50/50	40/60	36/64
No Systematic Job Evaluation - agree/disagree	44/56	36/64	45/55	50/50
Salary Administration Unsound - agree/disagree	25/75	31/69	10/90	29/71
Boss has a Clear Understanding of Change in his Area of Responsibility - agree/disagree	65/35	72/28	66/34	59/41

Appendix A (continued)

	<u>Average All Respondents</u>	<u>Low Propensity</u>	<u>Indifferent</u>	<u>High Propensity</u>
<u>Don't Participate in Decisions or Tools to be Used in My Work - agree/disagree</u>	29/71	15/85	21/79	46/54
<u>Very Little Contact with Management - agree/disagree</u>	58/42	46/54	54/46	73/27
<u>Job Does Not Provide Opportunity to Advance in Social Position - agree/disagree</u>	48/52	38/62	47/53	59/41

* Less than 100% of the respondents were involved with this question.
All figures are stated in percentages.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

There are five parts to this questionnaire. Please answer the questions in each part. You need not sign the questionnaire. The responses you give to the questions asked will be kept entirely confidential.

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I

Instructions:

Please answer each of the following questions. This section deals with some background on you, your family, your job and the company you work for. Answer each question by checking the appropriate space at the right hand side of the page.

Your Current Job Title _____

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------|
| 1. How old are you ? | Under 25 | _____ 1 |
| | 25 - 34 | _____ 2 |
| | 35 - 44 | _____ 3 |
| | 45 - 54 | _____ 4 |
| | Over 54 | _____ 5 |
| 2. Are you married ? | Yes | _____ 1 |
| | No | _____ 2 |
| 3. How many dependents do you support ?
(Include wife, children or others who
look to you for financial support) | None | _____ 1 |
| | 1 - 2 | _____ 2 |
| | 3 - 4 | _____ 3 |
| | More than 4 | _____ 4 |
| 4. What is the highest grade you completed
in the school system? (or its approximate
equivalent if educated outside Canada) | Up to Grade 8 | _____ 1 |
| | 9 or 10 | _____ 2 |
| | 11 or 12 | _____ 3 |
| | 13 | _____ 4 |
| | Some University | _____ 5 |
| 5. Approximately how many people work at
your company's London location ? | Plant (if applicable) | _____ A |
| | Office | _____ A |
| | Total | _____ A |

NOTE: If you have taken trade or technical training please specify type below

(continued over page2)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I (continued)

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6. How long have you worked for your present employer?

Specify in years _____ B

7. How long have you worked on your present job?

8. Do you currently belong to a trade or office union or employee association?

Office Union _____ 1

Trade Union _____ 2

Employee Association _____ 3

No _____ 4

If yes, name of Union _____

If no, answer question 9, if yes skip to 11.

9. Have you ever belonged to a union or an employee association?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2

10. Are any of the employees in the company you work for members of the union?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2

11. On what basis is your salary calculated?

Hourly _____ 1

Weekly _____ 2

Bi-weekly _____ 3

Monthly _____ 4

12. Do you receive overtime pay on your job for hours put in above the regular work week?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2

13. Is the company you work for:

Growing rapidly? _____ 1

Growing slowly? _____ 2

Not growing at all? _____ 3

Declining? _____ 4

14. What is (was) your father's occupation?

Professional _____ 1

Self employed _____ 2

Manager _____ 3

Clerical _____ 4

Craftsman (Skilled) _____ 5

Operative (Semi-skilled) _____ 6

Farmer _____ 7

Other (specify) _____ 8

Where "other" is checked please specify occupation: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I (continued)

15. Has any member of your family ever been a member of a trade union?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

16. Have you taken any educational courses since leaving the regular school system?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

If yes, answer question 17; if no skip to 20

17. Why did you take the course(s)? (check more than one if applicable)

Interest _____ 1
Applicable to job _____ 2
Raise in pay _____ 3
Help promotion prospects _____ 4
Job security _____ 5
Other (specify) _____
_____ E
_____ E

18. Did your employer know you were taking the course(s)?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

If yes, answer question 19; if no, skip to 20

19. What was your employer's attitude toward your involvement in the course(s)?

Strongly encouraging _____ 1
Mildly encouraging _____ 2
Indifferent _____ 3
Discouraging _____ 4

20. Have you ever been laid off?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

21. Does the company you work for have a formal grievance procedure through which to air your problems?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

If yes, answer question 22; if no, skip to 23

22. Is the grievance procedure reasonably effective?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2

Skip to question 24

(Continued over page 4)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I (continued)

23. Since your company has no formal procedure for handling job grievances or complaints is there another method available to you for discussing job problems
- Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2
24. In your company are the openings for persons doing your type of work:
- Increasing rapidly? _____ 1
Increasing slowly? _____ 2
Steady? _____ 3
Decreasing? _____ 4
25. How does the management of the company you work for feel about unions and union members?
- Hostile _____ 1
Dislike _____ 2
Neutral _____ 3
Accept _____ 4
26. From the standpoint of promotions, how would you rate your prospects?
- Good prospects _____ 1
Limited prospects _____ 2
Nothing definite _____ 3
Dead end _____ 4
27. How do people in your company get promoted?
- Mostly merit _____ 1
Mostly seniority _____ 2
Other (specify) _____ F
_____ F
28. Does the management of the company you work for appear to you to be:
- Friendly & Cooperative _____ 1
Fair but distant _____ 2
Indifferent _____ 3
Antagonistic _____ 4
29. How would you rate the way management in your company keeps you informed on company policies, decisions and changes.
- Always well informed _____ 1
Sometimes well informed _____ 2
Sometimes informed _____ 3
Hardly ever informed _____ 4

(Continued over page.....5)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I (continued)

30. Approximately how large is the immediate work group with which you are in daily contact while performing your job?

Approximate number _____ 6

31. Relative to other companies you know about, are the wages paid by your employer:

Above average _____ 1
Average _____ 2
Below average _____ 3

32. Relative to other companies you know about, are the fringe benefits at your company:

Above average _____ 1
Average _____ 2
Below Average _____ 3

33. Relative to other companies you know about, are the opportunities for promotion at your company:

Above average 1 1
Average _____ 2
Below Average _____ 3

34. How do you feel about the rules your company has for people doing your kind of work?

Very satisfied _____ 1
Satisfied _____ 2
Somewhat dissatisfied _____ 3
Very dissatisfied _____ 4

35. How do you feel about the system used in your company to rate your performance on the job?

Very satisfied _____ 1
Satisfied _____ 2
Somewhat dissatisfied _____ 3
Very dissatisfied _____ 4

36. How do you feel about the way complaints are handled in your company?

Very satisfied _____ 1
Satisfied _____ 2
Somewhat dissatisfied _____ 3
Very dissatisfied _____ 4

37. How do you feel about the information you get on what is going on in the company?

Very satisfied _____ 1
Satisfied _____ 2
Somewhat dissatisfied _____ 3
Very dissatisfied _____ 4

(Continued over page.....6)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART I (continued)

38. How do you feel about the way you were trained for your present job?

Very satisfied... 1
Satisfied 2
Somewhat dissatisfied 3
Very dissatisfied 4

39. How satisfied are you with your present salary?

Very satisfied 1
Satisfied 2
Somewhat dissatisfied 3
Very dissatisfied 4

40. Are you satisfied with the way you have advanced in the company?

Very satisfied 1
Satisfied 2
Somewhat dissatisfied 3
Very dissatisfied 4

41. From the standpoint of social class where would you place yourself?

Upper class 1
Middle class 2
Working class 3
Lower class 4

42. In terms of your personal socio-political outlook (not necessarily the party you voted for) where would you place yourself?

Very conservative 1
Conservative 2
Liberal 3
Liberal Socialist 4
Socialist 5

43. Do you find your job:

Interesting most of the time 1
Fairly interesting 2
Somewhat boring 3
Dull most of the time 4

(Part II continued 7)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART II

Instructions:

You no doubt prefer some things more than others. Listed below are some things that you have experienced or know something about. The list is divided into twenty sections. Each section contains three brief statements describing various experiences.

Which do you prefer? To find out, simply arrange the three statements in each section in the order you prefer what they describe.

Use the numbers 1, 2, and 3 to indicate this order. Put down a "1" beside the experience you prefer most, and a "2" beside the experience you believe is the second most desirable. A "3" beside the statement indicates that you prefer the experience least of all.

Do each section separately. And remember, there are no right and wrong answers. Your first impressions are the best.

1. a ☐ To move to a better community.
b ☐ To go through an experience that opens up new and exciting possibilities.
c ☐ To receive help on work problems from a friend.
2. a ☐ To begin a job that is interesting and stimulating.
b ☐ To get a substantial life insurance policy paid for by the company.
c ☐ To become honorary chairman of an important organization.
3. a ☐ To join a group of close friends for lunch.
b ☐ To appreciate the meaning in a painting or a piece of music.
c ☐ To work by myself on an interesting work problem.
4. a ☐ To move to a better office.
b ☐ To participate in group activities at work.
c ☐ To work on a problem and prepare recommendations.
5. a ☐ To develop in myself new abilities and new interests.
b ☐ To handle easily my job responsibilities.
c ☐ To receive a letter from management complementing my work.
6. a ☐ To receive a new job title which involves expanding my responsibilities.
b ☐ To have an opportunity for further personal development.
c ☐ To receive a special money bonus.
7. a ☐ To spend time with my family.
b ☐ To sell some personal assets at considerably more than cost.
c ☐ To receive a strong invitation to present my views before an influential.
8. a ☐ To complete a project on time.
b ☐ To receive a letter from the manager complementing my work.
c ☐ To have an opportunity for further personal development.
9. a ☐ To receive an award from an important professional organization related to my work.
b ☐ To do a job well, even though no one comments on it.
c ☐ To receive increased participation in a profit sharing plan.

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART II (continued)

10. a ☐ To help a newcomer in the department get settled.
 b ☐ To receive increased annual returns on investments.
 c ☐ To find new ways of expressing my capabilities in leisure time activities
11. a ☐ To receive an option to buy stock at a price below current market.
 b ☐ To be invited to speak to a group of students on the importance of my work and its career opportunities.
 c ☐ To appreciate the meaning of a painting or a piece of music.
12. a ☐ To get a substantial life insurance policy paid for by the company.
 b ☐ To become honorary chairman of an important organization.
 c ☐ To assist a person with whom I work closely when he has difficulty with a project.
13. a ☐ To discover suddenly a new approach to a long-standing and baffling question.
 b ☐ To have a reunion with friends or family.
 c ☐ To have an investment go up sharply in value.
14. a ☐ To receive a special money bonus.
 b ☐ To discover suddenly a new approach to a long-standing and baffling question.
 c ☐ To work by myself on an interesting work problem.
15. a ☐ To do a job well even though no one counts on it.
 b ☐ To get an increase in salary.
 c ☐ To achieve greater sensitivity toward events and people around me.
16. a ☐ To appreciate even more the customs and ways of living of persons whose backgrounds differ from my own.
 b ☐ To be a member of a small circle of friends.
 c ☐ To begin a job that offers more challenging work.
17. a ☐ To move rapidly through a series of complex work problems.
 b ☐ To be invited to join a select management luncheon group.
 c ☐ To make new friends.
18. a ☐ To develop in myself new abilities and interests.
 b ☐ To participate in group activities at work.
 c ☐ To get an invitation to join the management of an important company.
19. a ☐ To increase my holdings of securities in important companies.
 b ☐ To talk about work interests with a close associate.
 c ☐ To size up a new work problem rapidly and move toward conclusions.
20. a ☐ To be a member of a small circle of close friends.
 b ☐ To find a way of tackling a difficult piece of work.
 c ☐ To receive from the company a noncontributory pension plan with greater retirement benefits.

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART III

Instructions:

On the following pages you will find a series of statements about various aspects that are often present in jobs. Please indicate the extent to which each aspect is present in your job by circling the appropriate column. (SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree)

- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1. The income associated with my work is not comparable to that paid for similar types of work in other companies. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2. My boss is not considerate in his relations with people | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3. My job brings me into contact with many interesting people in this company. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4. People who do well in my job can look forward to a wide variety of job opportunities. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5. My boss does not seek opinions and advice from those who work for him. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6. My job brings me into direct contact with a variety of stimulating people outside the company. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7. Normally, promotions to positions above mine are made from within the organization. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 8. The nature of my work is such that I see tasks or projects through from their beginning to their completion. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 9. In the company I work for, advancement is based on one's ability to produce results. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 10. My job involves very few repetitive or routine activities. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 11. Considering the significance of my job, the income associated with it is less than one might expect. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 12. The fringe benefits such as retirement plans, provisions for emergencies, sickness and accident plans, leave and vacations are not appropriate to the job. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 13. My job involves close working relationships with my supervisor and other management personnel. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 14. Support and encouragement for work well done is characteristic in my work situation. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 15. There is no systematic job evaluation program in the company I work for. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 16. The prospect for continuous employment in the company is not very great given its instability. | SA | A | D | SD |

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART III (continued)

17. Salary administration in the company I work for is unsound and unrealistic. SA A D SD
18. People in this organization know specifically to whom they report and exactly what they are supposed to do. SA A D SD
19. In the company I work for promotion policies do not relate career advancement to proven abilities. SA A D SD
20. In the company I work for most people have written job descriptions that provide clear guidelines as to their areas of responsibility. SA A D SD
21. The results achieved by my efforts on the job are not easily observable by me. SA A D SD
22. There is no significant prestige or status associated with my job. SA A D SD
23. Length of service in the organization is an important determinant of the pay for my job. SA A D SD
24. My boss has a clear understanding of the nature and direction of changes taking place in his area of responsibility. SA A D SD
25. I do not participate in deciding upon the tools, techniques or procedures to be used in accomplishing my work. SA A D SD
26. The working conditions surrounding my job do not subject me to physical discomfort. SA A D SD
27. The rules and regulations of the company provide most of the guidelines necessary for my work. SA A D SD
28. In my job I have very little contact with the persons who manage the company. SA A D SD
29. My present job pays as much or more as I would be likely to get elsewhere. SA A D SD
30. My job does not provide me with opportunities to advance in social position. SA A D SD

(Continued over page....11)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART IV

Instructions:

Please circle the response that best describes the way you feel about each of the following statements. (SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree)

1. I think the best man should be kept on the job regardless of seniority. SA A D SD
2. Unions impose too many restrictions on employers. SA A D SD
3. If it were not for unions, we'd have little protection against favoritism on the job. SA A D SD
4. Charges of "racketeering" in unions have been greatly exaggerated. SA A D SD
5. Employees of a firm have better wages and working conditions when all of them belong to a union. SA A D SD
6. Unions should have something to say about whom an employer hires. SA A D SD
7. A non-union shop usually pays lower than a union shop. SA A D SD
8. Union rules often interfere with the efficient running of an employer's business. SA A D SD
9. Every worker should be expected to join the union where he works. SA A D SD
10. We need more laws to limit the powers of labor unions. SA A D SD
11. Labor unions hold back progress. SA A D SD
12. The high wage demands of unions reduce chances for employment. SA A D SD
13. The growth of unions has made our democracy stronger. SA A D SD
14. The selfishness of employers can be fought only by strong unions. SA A D SD
15. Workers should not have to join a union to hold a job. SA A D SD
16. Labor unions should be more closely regulated by the Provincial Government. SA A D SD
17. Every labor union should be required to report its financial dealings to the Provincial Government. SA A D SD
18. In a factory where there is a union, workers who are not members should be required to pay regular union dues if they are getting union rates of pay. SA A D SD

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART IV (continued)

19. Most unions gain their membership by forcing workers to join with threats of violence. SA A D SD
20. If the majority of the workers in a plant vote to have a union, the others should be required to join. SA A D SD

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART V

Instructions:

The following statements describe the general approach of management toward some different aspects of their job. Please check the one statement in each group that seems to best describe the way management in your company operates. Once again there are no "right" answers and your first impressions are usually the best.

1. In my kind of job the management of the company I work for motivates employees by:-
 - a. Fear of punishment 1
 - b. Threats and occasional rewards 2
 - c. Rewards with occasional punishment 3
 - d. Rewards, economic and other forms 4

2. People doing the kind of work I do in the company:
 - a. Feel almost no responsibility for meeting overall company goals. 1
 - b. Feel little responsibility for meeting overall company goals 2
 - c. Feel some responsibility and generally behave in ways that help achieve company goals. 3
 - d. Feel a great responsibility for meeting overall company goals and are motivated to behave in ways which tend to implement company goals. 4

3. In the company I work for most important communications are:
 - a. Initiated from the top of the company and come down as directives 1
 - b. Initiated mainly at the top or patterned on top management communications 2
 - c. Patterned on communication from the top but there is room for initiative at the lower levels of the organization 3
 - d. Initiated at all levels of the organization and flow freely up and down 4

(Continued over page...13)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART V (continued)

4. In the company I work for most formal decisions are:
- a. Made by top management only 1
 - b. Made by lower levels of management within specific policies 2
 - c. Made by lower levels of management within broad guidelines 3
 - d. Made by many people within the organization with little interference from top management. 4
5. In the company I work for individual goals and jobs to be done are set out by:
- a. Orders and directives issued by top management 1
 - b. Broad management directives which allow limited opportunity for individual initiative. 2
 - c. Directives that are initiated by management after some discussion by all of the involved parties. 3
 - d. Guidelines established by group participation and agreement except in emergency situations. 4
6. In the company I work for measures of individual and department performance are:
- a. Not known. 1
 - b. Vague 2
 - c. Fairly well known. 3
 - d. Well known and useful 4
7. In the company I work for the primary concern for measuring and controlling performance lies with:
- a. The top management group. 1
 - b. Top management along with some lower level participation 2
 - c. All management levels. 3
 - d. Almost everyone in the organization. 4
8. In the company I work for the goals and philosophy are:
- a. Known only to top management 1
 - b. Known to most management and supervisory people 2
 - c. Fairly well known to everyone in the company 3
 - d. Freely communicated and known to everyone in the company 4

(Continued over page.....14)

QUESTIONNAIRE-PART V (continued)

9. In the company I work for the attitudes developed by people like myself toward company goals can best be described as:

- a. Usually hostile
- b. Sometimes hostile, sometimes favorable
- c. Most often favorable
- d. Strongly favorable

____ 1
____ 2
____ 3
____ 4

10. In the company I work for most of the management has:

- a. A lot of skill and experience in the type of work I do.
- b. Some skill and experience in the type of work I do.
- c. Little skill and experience in the type of work I do.
- d. Almost no skill and experience in the type of work I do.

____ 1
____ 2
____ 3
____ 4

11. The job I do places me in a position in the company such that:

- a. I have a great deal of direct contact with the people who make the major decisions in the firm.
- b. I have some contact and communication with the people who make the major decisions in the firm.
- c. I have little direct contact, but indirectly, much of the work I do is of direct use to those who make decisions in the firm.
- d. I have little contact either direct or indirect with the people in this company who make the major decisions

____ 1
____ 2
____ 3
____ 4

12. In the company I work for most of the people doing jobs like mine are:

- a. Doing specialized work most of the time
- b. Doing specialized work some of the time
- c. Doing a wide variety of work much of the time
- d. Doing a wide variety of work all of the time

____ 1
____ 2
____ 3
____ 4

13. In the job I have the decisions which affect my work are made:

- a. Mainly by me.
- b. Sometimes by me, more often by my supervisor.
- c. Some by my supervisor, some by his superior.
- d. Mostly by my supervisor or his superior

____ 1
____ 2
____ 3
____ 4

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU WISH TO ADD, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DO SO IN
IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW

Lined area for handwritten response.

Again I wish to thank you for your cooperation.

Handwritten signature



The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada

School of Business Administration

As I mentioned to you in our telephone conversation I am in the process of conducting an extensive study of employee attitudes toward several aspects of their work environment. To do this it is necessary to gather some expressions of opinion and some background information from a broad crosssection of the London workforce. Your consent to cooperate in this undertaking is sincerely appreciated.

Since the information from this research is to be used in the completion of a doctoral thesis it is not sponsored by either Unions or Management. Rather, it is a personal undertaking in which all of the data collected will be kept in the strictest confidence. The publication of results will be such that no individual's response will be open to identification.

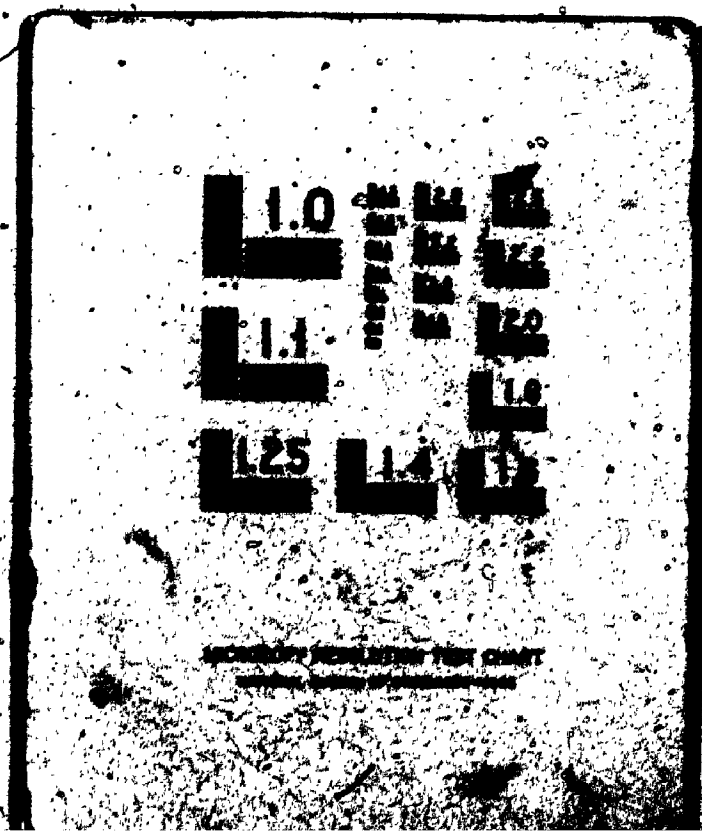
I would ask that you answer each question carefully since the information you provide is vital to the work I am undertaking.

Please feel free to call me at 438-6739 if you have any questions about the questionnaire or any other aspect of the study.

Needless to say I appreciate the time you are taking to complete the questionnaire. Without your assistance it would be impossible to do this research.

4 4

OF/DE



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